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NOVEMBER 1958

THE VOCATION OF CORNELIA CONNELLY—I

JAMES WALSH

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THE VOCATION OF CORNELIA CONNELLY—I

By

JAMES WALSH

WHENEVER Holy Church accedes to the request of the faithful to investigate the life and writings of any "servant of God," with a view to possible beatification and canonisation, what she seeks to establish beyond every shadow of doubt is a true and solid reputation for sanctity; not the ordinary holiness of those countless souls in the Church who live, substantially, blameless and edifying lives, but that sanctity which reproduces in an extraordinary manner the holiness which Christ Our Lord, in His human life on earth, revealed as flowing from His union with the Father: "Father, I have glorified Thee on earth, I have finished the work Thou hast given Me to do . . . that the world may know that I love the Father, as the Father commands Me to act, so do I act"; the holiness of Christ the Priest, Whose life the Father has crowned with suffering. The holiness of the saints is a holiness tried and tested; "Blessed is he who endures under trials. When he has proved his worth, he will win that crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him."

It is a reputation for this degree of holiness which must be established in the case of Mother Cornelia Connelly, Foundress of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, whose cause is about to be introduced formally before the Church's sacred tribunals. And it is a matter for regret that a book recently published¹ seems calculated to cast serious doubt on this reputation.

In the United States, *The Case of Cornelia Connelly* has achieved the status of a best-seller. It was the subject of a long and sensational review in *Time* magazine; and within the last few months it has been "condensed" in the *Catholic Digest*. Were the book presented as a straightforward factual biography, it would give less cause for concern. But the publishers make no secret of the

¹ *The Case of Cornelia Connelly*, by Juliana Wadham, Collins, 1955 (American edition, Pantheon Books 1957).

fact that "this book is concerned not only with Cornelia's amazing life story, but also with the question of her sainthood." This being the case, we are forced to submit the book to a most serious and searching criticism; and to say at the outset that though the author is obviously imbued with a desire to get at the truth, though she is meticulous in her efforts to achieve objectivity, though—and this is apparent in every word that she writes—she has a genuine love for the subject of her biography and is full of admiration for her, yet it must be admitted that her book, on the whole, from the viewpoint of Cornelia's sainthood, is rather a distortion than a factual portrait; and in the account of the most crucial period of Mother Connelly's life, it amounts to a compound of error and misinterpretation.

Mrs. Wadham is, within limits, a competent historian. Her bibliography, as it appears in the American edition, is impressive enough; and we are assured that she spent several years in research. It must be remarked, however, that she leans very heavily indeed on secondary sources—the previous biographies published in 1922 and 1950. She repeats most of their errors, and many of their conjectures. And the claim of her American publishers, "The story . . . told in full for the first time," is simply untrue. In her Preface, Mrs. Wadham informs us that the true case of Cornelia Connelly is whether or not she became "a saint in the sense of canonisation." To this radical question Mrs. Wadham answers, first and last, "I do not know." She is prepared to accept "the unfamiliar motives and behaviour of those who desire perfection"; she is prepared "to hunt not merely the saint in pursuit of his sanctity but in pursuit of his God" (though we must confess, that since sanctity is union with God, the significance of this particular distinction eludes us). With such preparation one can "begin to decide," she says, "if a candidate for sainthood is, in fact, a saint." Thus she poses the problem, pursues it, works it out, but keeps her answer covered up; or perhaps like the teacher with a small child, says, "There now, I have worked it out for you, find the answer yourself." But in spite of her ultra-caution, she consistently sets the query against Cornelia's motives; so that when she finally says, "It is possible to wonder whether her will was sufficiently subject to Him to purify and strengthen her love till it became magnified to the heroic proportions of a saint," we have her judgment. It is "thumbs down."

This may appear to be an unfair criticism of one who has sincerely striven to "let the facts speak for themselves." But it is not so. Mrs. Wadham proclaims that she has had access to all available material, except that in the Southwark archives (material which vindicates Cornelia's integrity of purpose rather than otherwise). She has confidence in her competence to read the facts and to weigh them; and she ends in a state of doubt. "Not Proven" is her verdict on the case of Cornelia Connelly. And "Not Proven" is a sufficiently damning indictment where we are concerned with "reputation for sanctity" in the strict sense of that term.

Two questions arise: (a) Whether, in every case, Mrs. Wadham has the facts, and (b) whether, in every case, she is competent to weigh the facts. She would, of course, lay no claim to be well-versed in the fields of dogmatic and spiritual theology. Yet she must perforce encroach upon these fields in "weighing the facts." To take a simple example of the serious misrepresentation that may arise from a mere lack of acquaintance with theological terminology, we may cite the following: "Cornelia told her nuns that the actual conversion dated from a retreat she made at Grand Côteau in 1839," with the comment, "She had been a Catholic for four years, but this was the first time that the fact had any reality for her." Let us first turn to the "source" of the "fact" before dealing with the interpretation. In the *Life* published in 1922 we read:

It must have been the retreat of Christmas, 1839, to which she alluded when in after years she told one of her nuns that in her first retreat of three days she was *converted*, and that all subsequent retreats only served to complete the work of this one, in which the sketch of her interior life was drawn.

The source we may note, says *must have been* and *one of her nuns*. Mrs. Wadham has no hesitation in making the *must have been* a categorical *was* (in fact, we know from the Journal of the Convent of Grand Côteau that Cornelia made a retreat there in 1838); and the singular becomes plural. From the point of view of interpretation, the italicised word *converted* tells us all that we need to know. Cornelia is speaking of her "second conversion." The words "all subsequent retreats," etc., explain this most lucidly. Mrs. Wadham, ignorant of the distinction between the first and the second conversion, omits them; and thus discounts all

the testimony that we possess concerning the sincerity and solidity of Cornelia's first conversion. Mrs. Wadham has already decided that Cornelia followed her husband into the Church—"even her choice of religion was dictated to her"; that her conversion was a case of "He for God only, she for God in him"; hence, she has nothing to say of the extreme importance of Cornelia's reception into the Church independently of her husband. She merely perpetuates the error that Pierce, already convinced, delayed his reception in his anxiety to be received with Roman pomp and circumstance. But a chance remark of Cornelia's in a letter to her sister Mary, dated 6 March 1836, and written from Rome, proves that Pierce was not yet convinced at the time of Cornelia's reception: "You may imagine my joy—Pierce is satisfied about miracles and has made his abjuration." Cornelia's love for her husband and respect for his intelligence were indeed external graces which brought her face to face with Christ's truth. But her whole-hearted acceptance of it was her own, made entirely independently of her husband.

It is with the same lack of understanding of spiritual theology that Mrs. Wadham can write so gaily, and without a thought for the tautology:

Cornelia was enchanted with the bold, clear strokes of St. Ignatius and surprised her spiritual directors by embracing what he called "the third degree of humility"—the voluntary preference for suffering hardships and humility whenever possible.

Again the source is garbled; what Cornelia's notes and her spiritual directors testify to is that she was striving to *practise* the third degree—i.e., striving to practise heroic sanctity. If Mrs. Wadham had cared to study that section of the *Spiritual Exercises* which deals with the degrees of humility and with the following of Christ in His sufferings and death, a teaching which forms one of the pillars of the spiritual structure which Cornelia founded, she would have seen that "enchanted" is hardly the *mot juste*.

These are but casual examples, but they illustrate a defective judgment; and even more important, a judgment which effectively obscures Cornelia's spiritual growth; which covers over the evidence that she was receiving special graces and striving with all her divinely-enlightened mind and strengthened will to co-operate with them. They reveal perhaps what is at the root of Mrs. Wadham's defective analysis of Cornelia's holiness—an

unconsciously Pelagian outlook, in which it is taken for granted that sanctity is capable of being explained exhaustively in terms of modern psychology.

In her Preface, Mrs. Wadham warns us that the "outsider" (a term doubly unfortunate in view of recent literary trends) will have difficulty in assessing Cornelia's sanctity "because . . . sanctity is a supernatural state. It has little natural appeal." And again, at the end of the book, it is said that to an "outsider," the determination to attain to spiritual perfection "seems based on pride." Mrs. Wadham never explains to us who these outsiders (and insiders) are. Presumably, the insider is one who is always conscious that "sanctity is a supernatural state," and that this state is the work of the Holy Spirit. And if he undertakes the task of writing an account of the life of one whose alleged sanctity is under review (we must not forget that according to the explicit avowal of the author, *The Case of Cornelia Connelly* turns on her sanctity), he will be constantly aware that he is writing, not simple biography, but hagiography. Hence his primary concern will be the interior life of the Servant of God, its formation and development, the principles of its growth, and especially its relation to the Church's traditional spiritual teaching. He will treat his sources on this central and fundamental point with scrupulous care. He will, in a word, before he begins his task, be quite sure in his own mind, in the context of the teaching of Holy Scripture and of tradition, of the precise meaning of the phrase "sanctity is a supernatural state." It is in all this that Mrs. Wadham is not properly competent. She is never quite certain whether she is writing hagiography or simple biography, whether she is an outsider or an insider. That holiness is revealed in its perfect lineaments in the person of Christ our Lord, and in the saints in their possession of the spirit of Christ, in that keeping of the word which is to "receive Him" and to live His life; that holiness is to be nailed with Christ to His Cross so that it is not the servant living but Christ living in the servant—it is this supernatural fact that Mrs. Wadham fails so often to allow for and to account for. "It is true that I live this mortal life," says St. Paul to his Galatians, "but my real life is my faith in the Son of God Who loved me and delivered Himself for me." Unless this truth is constantly before the eyes of the hagiographer, he will be led astray in his analysis of motives. He

will be hazy in his notions concerning the relationship between the natural and the supernatural; and when he belatedly remembers that sanctity is, after all, the work of God, he will be tempted to conclude that there can be irreconcilable opposition between the natural and the supernatural; that grace, rather than perfecting nature, may destroy it, and on its ruins build an entirely different personality. So Mrs. Wadham concludes: "When she founded an order she abandoned the personality, as well as the habits, of one woman for that of another. She was pressed out of her original form by the Will of God."

It is, then, in her handling of her sources in respect of Cornelia's interior life that Mrs. Wadham is so unsure. In spite of her apparent acquaintance with a treatise like the *Ancren Riwle* or with the works of St. Teresa of Avila, she does not seem to grasp the essential role which the Spiritual Director or the Confessor must play in the interior life of every soul who is earnestly seeking the perfection of union with God. Direction demands that the conscience of the spiritual child or penitent be wholly open to the spiritual Father or Confessor. As Cornelia herself says in one of her spiritual notebooks:

We do not know ourselves and cannot judge if we are weak or strong; our Confessor knows us and can judge for us better than ourselves. Therefore, if our Confessors decide that our propositions are for the glory of God, without doubt it is His Holy Will.

The director's task is to interpret, out of his own spiritual knowledge and experience and his own familiarity with God, the work of the Holy Spirit in the soul of his penitent. Scrupulous obedience to the advice of the Confessor or Director (given, of course, ordinary prudent knowledge concerning his wisdom and right intention) is always demanded of a penitent. We recall that Our Lord Himself insists on this in His private Revelations to saints like Teresa of Avila and Margaret Mary Alacoque. A cardinal factor in the shaping of Cornelia's interior life from Grand Côteau to Derby is the Spiritual Director. In her treatment of the growth of Cornelia's vocation from the second conversion at Grand Côteau in 1838 (or '39) until the climax at Derby ten years later, Mrs. Wadham consistently ignores, under-estimates or misinterprets the role of Cornelia's directors, and hence discounts the vital importance of their testimony. So she writes of the first of Cornelia's great trials, the accidental

death of her youngest son at the age of two and a half, and in circumstances of great suffering:

Her diary is the only witness. Three words record the night. There is little to show whether they are resigned or rebellious, given involuntarily or wrung from her by insupportable pressure—only the re-iteration like the beating of a closed fist upon the page, "Sacrifice, Sacrifice, Sacrifice."

Now this is the sort of romanticism that Mrs. Wadham has declared it her intention to avoid. There is, in fact, nothing in this diary-entry to connect it with "the night"; the diary is therefore no witness here. The testimony we do have, and it is most valuable, is from her director, Père Abbadie. He speaks of the beauty of the soul which God entrusted to his care, and adds: "The death of her child she bore with the deep sensibility of a loving mother, but at the same time with the strong resignation of the perfect Christian." This testimony goes unrecorded by Mrs. Wadham.

When Pierce broke the news to Cornelia in October of 1840, of his conviction that he had a vocation to the priesthood, Cornelia, says Mrs. Wadham,

was stricken and disbelieving. The hierarchy was against her. They were sure that Pierce was a man cut out for great things, a man apart. Among the spiritual directors who urged her most strongly, and there were several, including Fr. McCloskey, later to become the first American Cardinal, was Bishop Flaget, their friend and admirer for many years. An exile from the French Revolution, Flaget, when he came to America, was from necessity, a missionary, pioneer, and executive. Yet he had lived all his life with the burning desire to become a Trappist monk. He was a man dangerously ready to sympathise with frustration of the spirit and to promote its goal. To him, and to the others, the special vocation was a delicate important call that must be heard. They assured her, in spite of, on one occasion, her tears, that tragic as the situation was, and rarely as the Church allowed it, they were convinced that both Pierce and she were specially called . . . Cornelia agreed. She had to. There were too many arguments against her and, in the argument of the heart, suffering as well. There is a stage in dilemma where, if the intention is to discover and act upon the right thing, the right thing seems identifiable only with what demands most sacrifice. It was so in Cornelia's case. Her acceptance was the hardest thing ever asked of her, against which her instincts and reason rebelled.

Here we have mistakes of fact, confusion of order of events, hasty psychological judgments, reliance on most doubtful testimony, and a disregard of trustworthy evidence. The only factual evidence we have of the positive intervention of Bishop Flaget (and Mrs. Wadham's "Freudian" comment is surely over-hasty) at this time is from a letter of Pierce's published in 1854 as part of his apologia for apostatising. There is no support for the judgment that Cornelia was "stricken and disbelieving," except a long and rambling statement, full of error and inaccuracy, made in 1911 by Mrs. Adeline Duval Mack, a daughter of Cornelia's eldest sister. I cite from this statement:

Finally Pierce Connelly wrote my Aunt Rev. Mother must come to Rome and see Pius IX¹, which she did. The Pope was then very old and in some way Connelly persuaded him to allow him to enter the priesthood on condition his wife would enter a convent taking perpetual vows. This state of affairs nearly drove Aunt Rev. Mother wild—her devotion to her husband and children was so great—Pius had consultations with his Cardinals and advisors and the matter was decided. . . . There is one instance I can give from Cardinal McCloskey of New York—he was a young priest at the time studying at Rome—In one of my interviews with him in New York—he said "I can see Reverend Mother Connelly approaching me clasping her hands and her beautiful eyes uplifted to my face—'Fr. McCloskey, is it necessary for Pierce Connelly to make this sacrifice and sacrifice me—I love my husband and my darling children. Why must I give them up—I love my religion and why cannot we remain happy as the Earl of Shewesburys [*sic*] family—Why has Pope Pius granted this?' My heart was full of sympathy. I gave all the consolation in my power. I looked upon the action of the Pope as a mistake but I could not say so. I felt the ways of God were mysterious and no doubt something great was to be accomplished."

There is no other evidence, apart from this, which records Cornelia's tearful distress. It is to this statement, no doubt, to which Mrs. Wadham refers. But Fr. (afterwards Cardinal) McCloskey was not in Rome during the period of Cornelia's second sojourn there. In 1841 he was President of St. John's College, Fordham, and from 1842 was engaged on parish work in the diocese of New York until 1844, when he was appointed

¹ This is an instance of Mrs. Mack's inaccuracy. Gregory XVI was Pope at this time.

auxiliary bishop. If Cornelia ever had an interview with him, it was not in Rome. There is no evidence of his having visited Grand Côteau or of Cornelia's having visited New York during 1841-42. In any case, it is highly unlikely that an ecclesiastic of his standing would commit himself to saying (especially to such an excitable witness), "I looked upon the action of the Pope as a mistake," particularly when the "action" referred to was a solemn decree of separation, granted only after the petition of the parties concerned, and their solemn oath that their consent was freely given, uninfluenced by any human motive. Whatever the worth of Mrs. Mack's statement, it is clear that Cardinal McCloskey cannot be cited amongst Cornelia's directors, or as one of those who "were convinced that both she and Pierce were specially called."

The most important evidence (and apart from her own spiritual notes the only trustworthy evidence) of Cornelia's reaction at this time is, as we might suspect, that of her Confessor, Père Abbadie, to which Mrs. Wadham does not refer. He writes:

When this last-mentioned person (Mr. Connelly) spoke of the great act of the separation, he was answered by his wife, "It is an important matter. Think of it twice and with deliberate attention, but if the good God asks the sacrifice, I am ready to make it to Him and with all my heart."

There is also a curious entry in one of Cornelia's notebooks under date of October 1840 to which Mrs. Wadham makes no reference. It reads:

For P. not to be P or N not to be N would be owing either to

1. Infidelity—or 2. Miracle—

but to suppose that one will be unfaithful is to suppose one will be lost—Sin of despair—to suppose or expect a miracle is to suppose more than God has promised—Sin or Presumption—therefore they are to be P and N—and are called to work out their calling—and called to do, she is called to do with all her might.

Mother Maria Joseph Buckle, who joined Mother Connelly in Derby in 1848, interprets "P. not to be P" as "Pierce not to be priest," and "N not to be N" as "Nelie (the family diminutive of Cornelia) not to be Nun." Mother Maria Joseph is the authoress of the first *Life* (unpublished)—the source of all later biographies. She began to write under obedience, in 1879, the year of

Cornelia's death. Her interpretation is therefore of considerable weight; and would seem to give the lie to Mrs. Wadham's assertion that Cornelia's "reason rebelled."

That Cornelia was at this time the victim of acute mental suffering is patent. But we cannot fail to notice (as Mrs. Wadham fails to notice) the supernatural relevance of this trial to the manner of Cornelia's spiritual development. In this same year, 1840, between the death of her child and Pierce's revelation, we find the following jottings in her spiritual notes:

Feb. 8 off. mortification

" " Throw all on confessor

" " Vow of Obe.[dience] offered

Feb. 9 I will ask of my God without ceasing and he will give me to drink—Oh, Jesus, give me the sorrow, in meditating on thy blessed wounds, or some portion, at least, that thy blessed mother had—It is not presumption to think one is called to perfection but to think there is no fear of ourselves—It is not presumption to have hope and joy and confidence in God's grace—It is presumption to think we do and will always desire God's grace.

(We may note in passing that the last part of this entry, "It is not presumption," etc., Mrs. Wadham wrongly alleges to have been written more than a year later—one of Cornelia's reflections which reveal her state of indecision concerning Pierce's call.) Cornelia's attitude, it is plain, is knitted to, identifiable with that of Our Lord Himself in the Garden of the Agony: "Father, if it be possible, let this Chalice pass from Me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." It reflects a long drawn-out struggle between the natural will which seeks the immediate good and shrinks from the immediate evil, and the reasonable will, which is reasonable only in so far as it is in perfect conformity with the Divine Will. It is this conformity which is Cornelia's goal. Christ our Lord became man to reveal to us that the perfection of human nature according to the Divine purpose, that Divine Economy which looked forward from the beginning of time to the restoration of all things, and especially of all that is perverse and evil in the heart of man through misuse of his free will, in the elevation of man in Christ to the supernatural—the Divine Nature; this perfection is in Christ in virtue of the hypostatic union, and it is given to man, as he clings to Christ, through the

grace of Christ. It is not permitted to the Christian to assume that there is perfection, in the concrete, in human nature, independently of the Divine purpose as it is revealed in the human nature, the earthly life of Christ. The "death to self" which Mother Connelly preached in season and out of season, and practised with such heroic fidelity in these years of the development of her vocation, is the rejection of this instinctive "natural" attraction to the immediate good and the shrinking from the immediate evil (which Christ our Lord permitted Himself to experience in His human nature in His Passion) in so far as this runs counter to the Divine Will; but there must always be the accompanying positive movement, that co-operation with the mystery of divine grace which is receiving Christ, "putting on Christ." As Cornelia points out so strongly in a letter to her brother Ralph in 1846:

Time and eternity—eternity will prove if I have abandoned my duties to God and my dear children—Yes, dear Ralph—be persuaded the more we love God—the more we love our natural duties and the more deeply we penetrate into the divine mysteries, the more capable we become of fulfilling them perfectly—I mean fulfilling our natural duties.

To say, as Mrs. Wadham does, that "There is a stage in dilemma where, if the intention is to discover and act upon the right thing, the right thing seems identifiable only with what demands most sacrifice," is, as we have seen, to base a judgment not on fact but on conjecture. Yet such a judgment does seem, at first sight, a most subtle analysis of human motive. Drive the good Christian far enough in his pursuit of conformity to the Divine Will, and you will have him mistake his own weakness for Christ's strength and power. You will have him wandering in an uncharted sea between the Scylla of his human "natural" weakness, and the Charybdis of a terrible self-deception. If he renounces what he believes to be weakness and self-will, he will fall prey to the belief that all his natural instincts and desires must be rejected simply because they are natural. This, of course, is the outsider's view, a Freudian concept of religion; or it is to identify a stoic asceticism with Christianity; or more serious still, could it not imply even that the Church's traditional spirituality may to some extent be tainted with the error that human nature is essentially corrupted by original sin?

This outsider's analysis is carried one step further by Mrs. Wadham when, speaking of the frequent references in Cornelia's spiritual notes to Abandonment to the Divine Will, she says: "There is a luxury in abandonment in religion as well as in life, and it is arguable that she had no right to give without reserve"; the implication being that here we have a spiritual masochism, a pleasure more perverse, an "enthusiasm" more vicious than the excesses of the flagellants, in that it is far more subtle, far more difficult to detect—the pleasure of relief in burning one's boats, mingled with the subtle spiritual satisfaction to be obtained from mortifying one's natural appetites and desires. Such mental states, it should be said, are not unknown in the history of the Church's Spirituality; and the competent Spiritual Director will be quick to distinguish between true and false abandonment, especially where there are signs of a volatile or unstable temperament. But nowhere in Cornelia's case is there any evidence of mental unbalance. Whilst the merest acquaintance with the doctrine of Abandonment shows us that Cornelia is following the classic spiritual pattern. (We may also add that, for her, Mrs. Wadham's bifurcation between religion and life would have been a vicious one. "For me to live is Christ," she says at this time, with St. Paul.) If Cornelia had been reduced to the sort of mental plight to which Mrs. Wadham alludes (and, we repeat, there is no evidence whatsoever for such a supposition), then she sought the sure remedy—scrupulous obedience to her spiritual directors. It was Christ in His Church which gave her "the right to give without reserve"; for a Catholic no argument can stand against this. Thus Cornelia's way out of the dilemma was not a Hobson's choice of the more difficult, but a personal and positive adherence (reiterated, as Christ Himself was impelled to reiterate "Not My Will but Thine") to the Christ Who is identified with His Church. Every priest authorised in the Church to hear confessions carries Christ's mandate to act as judge and physician in the name of Christ in the forum of conscience. When Mother Cornelia told her novices that they had three guides in the Spiritual life—God, Superiors and Conscience—she did not mean that these should be balanced one against the other, so that now we follow one, now the other. For her, "Superiors" meant the Church—Christ in His sacerdotal function, with His priestly authority, His Pontifical power—the *pons*, the bridge between

the Divine Will and the human conscience. For one walking the way of perfection, as Cornelia was at this time, the advice of her successive directors, ultimately ratified by the Holy See, was the voice of Christ. This was the voice to which she listened. It was God Who called her, not her husband Pierce.

(To be concluded)

THE NOTEBOOKS AND PAPERS OF GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS¹

A New Edition²

By

GRAHAM STOREY

OVER a quarter of Hopkins's poems in W. H. Gardner's most recent edition come from the two pocket-diaries Hopkins kept as an Oxford undergraduate: poems he thought he had destroyed before he became a Jesuit novice. Many of them rightly have a place of honour among his early work: "Easter Communion," "The Half-way House," "My prayers must meet a brazen heaven," the two sonnets "To Oxford." But the source they came from—Humphry House's 1937 edition of Hopkins's Notebooks and Papers—has long been out of print and is now practically unobtainable. There, edited with scrupulous care, are these poems, embedded in a host of personal entries—books to read, notes for poetry, friends' addresses, reflections on himself

¹ A talk given in the B.B.C. Third Programme, 23 February 1958.

² To be published by the Oxford University Press in January 1959, in two volumes: *Journals and Papers*, edited by Humphry House and completed by Graham Storey, and *Sermons and Devotional Writings*, edited by Christopher Devlin, S.J. The two volumes together constitute the second edition revised and enlarged of *The Notebooks and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, edited by Humphry House, 1937.

("Tuncks is a good name. Gerard Manley Tuncks. Pook Tuncks"), instructions to himself ("For Lent . . . No verses in Passion Week or on Fridays. Not to sit in armchair except can work in no other way.") It is these immediate settings for the poems that make the early notebooks peculiarly revealing.

During the last ten years, much has happened that would have made it quite wrong to reprint the Notebooks and Papers as they stood. First and foremost, a new Hopkins Journal has been found, of nearly 20,000 words. And secondly, the death in 1952 of Lionel Hopkins, the last survivor of Gerard's brothers and sisters (he was 97), has made available a mass of family material of all kinds: Gerard's letters, mostly to his mother and father (published by Professor Abbott in 1956); more of his sketches and music; other family letters, memoirs, photographs and scrap-books. This whole collection was catalogued by House in the Hopkins home at Haslemere and, where transcribable, transcribed. The time had clearly come to make available, not a selection only, but Hopkins's complete miscellaneous writings.

This was the task House planned in 1953. There had clearly to be two volumes. One is secular, the other religious. The first contains the two Oxford diaries, now virtually complete; the dialogue "On the Origin of Beauty" and several more undergraduate essays; the old and the new Journals; music and sketches. The rest of his early verse is here—much of it, of course, fragments: odd scenes from verse-dramas he never got very far with; images being tried out; sometimes just one or two lines:

"The moonlight-mated glowless glow-worms shine."

"The sun just risen

Flares his wet brilliance in the dintless heaven."

But there is one fine new sonnet, "Confirmed beauty will not bear a stress," brought together from two different places in the second diary (two words, alas, are illegible); first versions, with working variants, of "Easter Communion" and "New Readings"; and an unexpected find (part of it on a loose sheet missing in 1937)—an acid lampoon in Alexandrines on a baffling character called *Etherege*, who does not seem to be Sir George.

House undertook this volume himself, and was working on it, together with a biography of Hopkins's early years, until his tragic death in 1955. I was invited to complete the editing a year

later. The other volume contains all Hopkins's known religious writings: thirty-two sermons; his commentary on the *Spiritual Exercises*; Retreat notes: and this has been edited—as it could properly only be—by a Jesuit priest, Fr. Christopher Devlin, who has himself contributed much to Hopkins studies in the past.

Anyone who listened to House's broadcast talk "A New Edition of Dickens's Letters" in 1951, will remember the professional excitement he communicated as he described the editorial machinery of that immense project. Hopkins required nothing approaching that order. But here too, on a much smaller scale, was the same combination of range and detail; the determination to bring to life Hopkins's family, Oxford friends, Jesuit contemporaries, and the things that formed and revealed his visual taste: Butterfield's and Street's churches; the paintings of the Pre-Raphaelite and Nazarene Brotherhoods. Paintings especially. Like Swinburne and Rossetti, Hopkins made detailed notes on all the exhibitions he went to: the Royal Academy, Water-colour Society, "French and Flemish"; and House went through endless, forgotten, once-acclaimed masterpieces of the Chantry Bequest, to see and note exactly what it was that Hopkins had been so enthusiastic about. This sense of the inter-connectedness of things—of the relevant *minutiae* of a writer's personal history—was one of House's chief qualities as an editor; and his own notes, full of his varied knowledge of the nineteenth century—a major attraction of the first edition—are intimate evidence of it. Quite apart from Hopkins, the experience of following House's mind at work on this material has been memorable.

Much the most difficult, but also the most rewarding of the new editorial tasks was the preparation of the two Oxford diaries. The problem of the first edition was to select; the problem now to make sense of them complete. For Hopkins, like Coleridge, clearly made his entries whenever the impulse took him: one note begins in the middle of another; the first note is continued several pages later; fragments and variants of the same poem crop up over several weeks or months. But over one thing there can be no complaint. The writing—mostly in pencil—is beautifully neat and delightful to read: corners are smudged, but amazingly little, after nearly a hundred years, is wholly illegible.

These random, abundant, often oddly-angled notes are much the closest commentary we have on the time of Hopkins's first growth as a poet; there is also a great deal of one side of the Oxford of the 'sixties in them.

Take a few weeks during April and May 1865, the end of his second year, when there are no surviving letters to tell us of his mental life. The first entry shows the direction of his extra-Greats reading. It begins uncompromisingly, right up against the margin: "*in England*". It took a little time to realise that this was the other half of an entry seven pages back, "*Emilia*": *Emilia in England*, the original title of Meredith's novel *Sandra Belloni*. The list goes on: "*Grimm's Life of Michael Angelo*"; "*The Divine Master*," by Felicia Skene (a book of Devotions based on the Way of the Cross); "*The Validity of Non-Episcopal Ordination*," by Dean Goode, fierce champion of the evangelical party in the Church of England; "*Teaching of the Types*," by Robert Aitken, who left the Church for a time to preach in Wesleyan Chapels; "Dr. Pusey on Daniel" (the lectures in which he defended the Old Testament against the assaults of *Essays and Reviews*). You could hardly have a fairer-minded sample of the pious and controversial possibilities of the middle of the century.

Following that list comes this: "Butterfield built Lavington Church in Sussex (where, April 7th, Mr. Cobden was buried) and the Parsonage house, I believe." Hopkins's enthusiasm for Butterfield is familiar: he notes five of his churches in his diaries. But St. Mary's Church, Lavington, appears again—"To Midhurst, then walked to West Lavington and back, seeing the church, built fifteen years ago." That is part of the entry in his new Journal for 13 July 1866. Four days later, at Horsham, we have this: "It was this night I believe but possibly the next that I saw clearly the impossibility of staying in the Church of England." Lavington had been part of Manning's parish at the time of his conversion; but the church was the gift of his curate and intimate friend, C. J. Laprimaudaye, who became a Roman Catholic before it was finished. And Laprimaudaye's wife, Anne Francesca Hubbard, herself a convert soon after, was brought up in Stratford Grove, Essex, where the Hopkins family also lived before they moved to Hampstead. These may be straws; there is no proof that the families knew each other, nor that Hopkins knew the associations of that beautifully-sited little church. But the reasons for his

visit just then may well have been more personal and complicated than the interest in Butterfield he had noted a year before.

I leave out the next four entries—they need their full annotation to mean much—and come to this: “D.A.S. Mackworth Dolben, Revd. C. Pritchard, South Luffenham, Leicester.” Robert Bridges’s *Memoir*, attached to Dolben’s *Poems* (1911), is still much the best account of Dolben and his one meeting with Hopkins. But a little more has come to light recently which tends to strengthen their friendship. A letter to Newman, for instance, in which Dolben, revealing his decision to become a Roman Catholic, says: “Hopkins’s conversion hastened the end.” And a small notebook, among the Dolben Papers, containing his copies of two of Hopkins’s early poems: “Heaven-Haven” (here called “Fair Havens” or “The Convent”) and “For a Picture of S. Dorothea.” The interest of this entry is its position. It is followed at once by the sonnet “Where art thou friend, whom I shall never see”; and this closeness in time seems to bear out further what House suggested in the first edition: that the friend is almost certainly Dolben, and that the sonnet is obscure because he was closely bound up with Hopkins’s religious crisis of the month before.

The new *Journal*¹ consists of three thin black exercise-books, and was found in February 1947 by Fr. D. A. Bischoff, among the papers of the Jesuit Provinciate in Farm Street. The entries are not complete, but they cover much of the period between the end of the Oxford diaries and the beginning of the *Journal* published in the first edition; and their biographical interest is considerable. They run from 2 May 1866 at Oxford, to 24 July of the same year at a reading-party near Horsham; and from July 1867, the start of a short trip to Paris with a Russian friend from Christ Church, to July of the following year, in Switzerland, when the original *Journal* begins. They thus include the two most important decisions of his life; to become a Roman Catholic and to enter the Society of Jesus. The entry about the moment of his conversion I have already quoted. It goes on: “but resolved to say nothing to anyone till three months are over, that is the end of the Long, and then of course to take no step till after my Degree.” In fact, as we know, Hopkins wrote to Newman that he was

¹ Extracts have been published in *THE MONTH* (December 1950) and in *Poems and Prose of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, ed. W. H. Gardner, 1953 (Penguin).

"anxious to become a Catholic" in August, nine months *before* his Degree; and he was received less than two months later. What accelerated him is still not clear; his reasons may be in the missing section of the Journal.

The decisions about his vocation are as meticulously noted. He made them during a ten days' retreat with the Jesuits at Roehampton in April and May 1868: a retreat he clearly arranged for this purpose. On May 5th he records: "Resolved to be a religious"; and on May 7th, "Home, after having decided to be a priest and religious, but still doubtful between St. Benedict and St. Ignatius." That doubt he settled within a week, for on the 14th, as we know, Newman congratulated him on his choice and wrote: "Don't call 'the Jesuit discipline hard,' it will bring you to heaven. The Benedictines would not have suited you."¹

One final resolution is of immense interest. It is entered, cryptically, in three stages: Aug. 23 (1867). "Then to the chapel of the poor Clares where I made my resolution 'if it is better,' but now, Sept. 4, nothing is decided. . . . See *infra* May 2 and 11."

May 2 (1868). "This day, I think, I resolved. See *supra* last 23rd of August and *infra* May 11."

May 11 (1868). "Slaughter of the innocents. See above, the 2nd."

What is this other resolution that troubled him, apparently, so much? The elaborate cross-referencing makes it clear first that it was a separate one of its own, although clearly intertwined with those about his vocation; and secondly that it had great importance to him. House left a long note on these entries, concluding—to my mind without a shadow of doubt—that the act Hopkins gradually resolved upon and carried out on May 11th, after the retreat at Roehampton, was the burning of his poems, referred to in the famous letter to Canon Dixon: "What I had written I burnt before I became a Jesuit and resolved to write no more." The slaughtered innocents were his poems, the children of his creation. But it is here worth pointing out that probably much less than many people think was totally lost. Revised or finished versions of what are only drafts in the two diaries, certainly; and perhaps a few poems written during the year after he went down from Oxford. Taking the evidence of diaries and letters together, however, it is remarkable that there is so little poetry altogether unaccounted for.

¹ *Further Letters of G.M.H.*, ed. C. C. Abbott, 2nd edition, 1956, p. 408.

The process of writing up his Journal clearly served to some extent as a literary outlet. For us, though, this early Journal has less purely literary value than his later one. It is scappier and there are fewer of those fully-explored Ruskinian landscapes and cloudscapes. But some of the trees and flowers that later find their triumphant place in the poems are first noted here: the whitebeam, for instance—"wind-beat whitebeam" of "The Starlight Night"; and wild chervil—"fretty chervil" of the sonnet "Thou art indeed just, Lord." In particular, there are wonderfully exact and delicate descriptions of the leaves of different trees. Beech-leaves, "soft vermilion leather just-budded," are "crisply pinched like little fingered papers." Elm-leaves "sit crisp, dark, glossy and saddle-shaped along their twigs." Oaks baffle him at first: "the organisation of this tree is difficult," he wrote on 11 July 1866, "But I shall study them further." A week later he has the answer, and it explains for him the whole being of the tree:

I have now found the law of the oak leaves. It is of platter-shaped stars altogether; the leaves lie close like pages, packed, and as if drawn tightly to. But these old packs, which lie at the end of their twigs, throw out now long shoots alternately and slimly leaved, looking like bright keys. All the sprays but markedly these ones shape out and as it were embrace greater circles and the dip and toss of these make the wider and less organic articulations of the tree.

Later, in Switzerland (July 1868), another shape fascinates him, that of the wedge, keystone, coign: and characteristically he revives the obsolete form "quain" for it. "Swiss trees are like English, well inscaped—in quains"; "The straight quains and planing of the Alps were only too clear." Twenty years later, in "Epithalamion," he used the same word: "burly all of blocks Built of chancequarrid, selfquaind rocks." These early Journal entries further confirm what critics have stressed already: that long before he read Duns Scotus, Hopkins was searching for "inscape" in nature, for the "thisness" that is both the beauty of an object and the law of its being. He needed Duns Scotus to give that pursuit religious and so, for him, poetic sanctity.

We now have a more direct source of Hopkins's poetic vocabulary: his pages of notes on words in the two Oxford diaries, most of which House had reluctantly to omit in 1937. Some are just lists: linked almost always by more than sound and clearly composed with great enjoyment: "Flick, fillip, flip, fleck, flake";

"twig, twist, twine, twire (?), twy": here, already, is something of the future delight in packed alliteration and assonance. Others, energetic explorations into sources and etymological relationships, became a store-house of memory for the poems. To take just two examples. The "blear share" of death from "The Wreck of the Deutschland" must owe something to this diary-note: "Shear, shred, potsherd, shard. The ploughshare that which divides the soil. Share probably = divide." And the image of the storm in "The Loss of the Eurydice"—"Hailropes hustle and grind their Heavengravel"—surely draws on his memory of noting the latin *grando*: "Grando meaning splinters, fragments, little pieces detached in grinding, hence applied to hail." All show the excitement in words that is of the essence of Hopkins's genius. House considered these notes interesting enough in themselves to ask his colleague, Alan Ward, his opinion of them as a philologist; and Ward found them sufficiently impressive to contribute an appendix to this new edition, examining in detail Hopkins's philological claims, guesses and discoveries, made before philology had hardened into an exact science.

Hopkins's music and drawings have also gained from the help of experts. Scattered facsimiles and transcriptions of some of his songs have appeared before. But, for the first time, his whole musical output (including some new songs found in 1952) has been examined by a musician, John Stevens, in relation to his poems. He became convinced that it should be edited complete: and that is what he has done. Of the thirty settings mentioned by Hopkins in letters and here discussed, the music for fourteen has survived, including the setting for one poem of his own, "What shall I do for the land that bred me . . .?" Seen now as a whole, their greatest interest is in the light they throw on Hopkins's feelings for the sound of poetry. But they are not without musical interest too. Here, to quote Stevens's conclusion, "His design was, quite simply, to extend the *melodic* resources (this included also the rhythmic) of music by a return to fundamentals—to the infinite subtlety and expressiveness of human speech and to [what Hopkins called] the 'world of mathematics' in music."

The selection of Hopkins's drawings reproduced in the first edition of the Notebooks aroused great interest. Many more are given now. Hopkins filled his two early diaries (particularly the first) with small, sometimes minute, pencil sketches: clouds,

flowers, a water-rat; scores of Gothic arches, windows, carved capitals; a slightly absurd, but very engaging portrait of himself at twenty signed "Gerard Hopkins, reflected in a lake." Of these, essentially illustrative, closely related to the diaries, House made his own selection for this edition. But over thirty more of Hopkins's drawings have been reproduced here, mostly chosen from his surviving sketchbooks on the advice of John Piper. These again show Hopkins's intense observation: of trees, wind-swept or gracefully erect; intertwined foliage; rocks and plants—a conjunction he particularly liked. But they are not all descriptive. There is the extraordinary Blake-like seascape that heads his early poem, "A Vision of the Mermaids" (reproduced once before, in a limited edition of 1929); and some comic sketches, drawn with delicate fantasy: a beetle in an acorn-cup stokes a tiny railway-engine; a tortoise in petticoats holds back a leaping hare by a string; Robin Goodfellow sits astride the vanquished devil (this headed a letter), while boy-devils, inset, weep into copious handkerchiefs. As John Piper says in the essay he has contributed on Hopkins as an artist, we should not be misled into thinking that the painter in him could have got the upper hand over the poet; but his intense particularising instinct "allows his drawings at their best a special English merit."

Fragments of early verse, music, sketches, philology. "My old notebooks and beginnings of things, ever so many, which it seems to me might well have been done, ruins and wrecks," so Hopkins wrote to his friend Baillie in April 1885, in one of his spells of despair in Dublin. But five years earlier, in that wonderful meditation on "The Principle or Foundation" that opens the *Spiritual Exercises*, he had written: "that taste of myself, of *I* and *me* above and in all things, which is more distinctive than the taste of ale or alum, more distinctive than the smell of walnutleaf or camphor. . . . Nothing else in nature comes near this unspeakable stress of pitch, distinctiveness, and selving, this selfbeing of my own." That sureness of self is his bulwark against despair. And there is a strong enough taste of it here to make these miscellaneous papers much more than the "beginnings of things."

CICERO AND CHRISTIAN HUMANISM

A Bimillenary Commemoration

By

P. G. WALSH

ON 7 DECEMBER 43 B.C., Cicero was finally hounded to death on the orders of the Second Triumvirate, and Mark Antony thus satiated his hatred by a murder which Julius Caesar, had he lived, would never have permitted. As we approach the bimillenary of this savage act of vengeance, the controversies which surround Cicero the politician will doubtless be revived. His detractors will emphasise his undoubted weaknesses of character—the vanity which led him to exaggerate his achievements, his petulance in moments of adversity, the moral cowardice which led to such undignified tergiversations in his attitudes to Caesar and Pompey. His apologists (and in England they have been many) will stress the perplexing situations which confronted him, in which statesmen increasingly depended upon military prowess and army support to maintain predominance. First-century Rome was an age too turbulent for philosopher-kings.

The dust raised by such controversy should not, however, be permitted to cloak the more abiding legacy which Cicero as man of letters bequeathed to posterity, especially during the years when he was compelled to retire from the political scene. In particular two facets of this literary activity should be recalled with gratitude; first his philosophic writing, and secondly those sections of his rhetorical studies where he outlines a sane educational programme for a society's *élite* which some floundering educationalists of today could profitably study. Together this body of writing constitutes that Ciceronian *humanitas* which was so important formatively in the development of Christian humanism—a debt all too infrequently acknowledged.

I.

Cicero's contribution to philosophy has frequently been assessed in scathing terms, but such criticism has failed to take into account both his aims and the chief focus of interest in the philosophical world of his day. He did *not* claim to be an original philosopher. As he reviewed the aridity of Latin studies confronting his generation (only Epicureanism was represented, a school for which he had boundless contempt), he conceived it as his patriotic duty to enrich in this respect his native language, which he repeatedly maintained to be perfectly adequate for philosophical enquiry. So he chose particular works by Greeks of acknowledged eminence from Plato onwards, and freely translated them into Latin, frequently adapting them to the Roman scene and encasing them in an artistic dialogue-form. "They are copies," he writes to Atticus, "I supply no more than the words, of which I have a great store."

The fact is that originality and speculation were not conspicuous features of post-Aristotelian philosophy. In particular, the Academic school, to which Cicero belonged, maintained that no absolute truth could ever be attained; its spokesmen (like many present-day philosophers) conceived their task as one of criticism rather than speculation. Thus there was no positive Academic dogma, except that its adherents should not be dogmatic; and in their critiques of the views of other schools, the Academics naturally indicated their approval of some tenets and their disapproval of others. This procedure has won for Cicero the derogatory epithet of "eclectic," the implication being that he was a "scissors-and-paste" philosopher, whereas in fact his method reflects the orthodox procedure of Academicism. Again, scholars have frequently adverted to his espousing contradictory opinions at different times, apparently unaware that in this too he subscribes to the doctrine of his school that certain truth cannot be attained, that one must adopt the balance of probabilities which might vary at different times: *modo hoc, modo illud probabilius videtur*.

The Greek originals freely translated by Cicero have been largely lost; hence he is frequently the oldest extant authority for the tenets of these sources. Many scholars point to the contradictions, inconsequential statements, and lack of lucidity with which these views are sometimes presented, implicitly accusing

him of a lack of comprehension and of incompetence in translation. Yet the faults may have been endemic in the original Greek treatises, especially those of the Stoics.¹ Further, if we remember that Latin was at this time a language largely undeveloped for philosophical purposes, Cicero's achievement is put into better perspective. He was indeed no dabbler in Greek philosophy, as is constantly suggested, but (in Reid's phrase), "the most learned Roman of his age with the single exception of Varro." His letters constantly attest to the diligence of his studies and the scope of his interests.

Thus Cicero inaugurated philosophical writing in Latin, a tradition which was to continue long after the Greek stream had dried up. And in particular his role in the reconciliation of Christian theology with Greek philosophy has an importance all too rarely appreciated. Many of the Western Fathers could, of course, read the Greek treatises directly, but for others Cicero was an essential intermediary. At the very inception of Christian apologetic literature, Minucius Felix in his *Octavius* draws heavily on Cicero's *De Natura Deorum* to emphasise the beliefs common to Christians and the noblest pagans. The *Octavius* is a second-century dialogue between Caecilius, a pagan Roman, and Octavius, a Christian. First Caecilius proposes that there is no reason to posit a divine agency to account for the origin of the universe; chance may govern all. But as the truth cannot be established, it is better to cleave to the ancestral religion, fortified by tradition, than to indulge in vague speculation. (This affords an interesting insight into the reasons for the survival of the Roman religion, long discredited by the attacks of Epicurean and Academic philosophers.) In his reply, Octavius does not draw upon Biblical testimony, and has little to say on the cardinal Christian dogmas; instead his arguments meet the pagan on grounds he understands. Here the Stoic doctrines from the *De Natura Deorum* are relevant, and Caecilius's Chance as arbiter of the universe is confronted with Providence. Octavius, too, demonstrates the superiority of the arguments for one God, not many—again depending on Ciceronian premisses.

This attempt to emphasise the beliefs common to Christianity and pagan philosophy is continued by Lactantius. "The Christian Cicero," as Jerome calls him, was an African who had witnessed

¹ See the introduction to J. S. Reid's (larger) edition of the *Academica*.

the persecutions under Decius and Diocletian, and who after the Edict of Constantine composed Christian apologetics. His most important work, the *Divine Institutes*, analyses contemporary polytheism, criticises pagan philosophy (but without Tertullian's virulent polemic), and finally expounds the theory of true knowledge in Christian revelation. Though he never praises Cicero as politician or advocate, he reveres him as a thinker, continually referring to him in such terms as *perfectus philosophus* and *Romanae philosophiae princeps*.¹ The *Divine Institutes* is crowded with arguments taken from Cicero's philosophical writings—in particular, the proof for the existence of God *e consensu gentium*, the criticism of some Roman deities as lying fable, and the Platonic argument for the immortality of the soul, retailed from the *Tusculan Disputations*.

The influence of Cicero is also conspicuous in the writings of the three greatest fathers of the West—Ambrose, Augustine, and Jerome. The old Classical learning was allowed to survive primarily as a handmaid to Christian theology, to reinforce the authority of the Bible; and Cicero's philosophy was from this aspect the most vital facet of that learning. St. Augustine remarks that Christianity, like the Jews in their flight from Egypt, must carry away the gold and silver vessels of her enemies, and employ them for her own uses.²

Especially significant is the Christian espousal of much Stoic ethical teaching as delineated by Cicero. Post-Aristotelian philosophers were in general indifferent to physical speculation; for them the central issue was the *ars vivendi*, the good life. Naturally enough, this was one platform on which some reconciliation was possible between Christian teaching and pagan philosophy. Cicero's influence is conspicuous, for example, in St. Ambrose's *De Officiis Ministrorum*. Just as Cicero wrote the Stoic-inspired *De Officiis* for his son Marcus, so Ambrose writes for his spiritual sons, the candidates for the priesthood, and this synthesis of Christian morality is organised precisely within the Ciceronian framework. The doctrines expounded by Cicero are developed or confuted by reference to Biblical authority, but there are many direct borrowings from Stoic ethics—the concept of the *honestum*, *utile*, *et quid praestantius*, the distinction between

¹ *Inst.* I, 15, 16: 17, 3. On the topic of Lactantius's debt to Cicero, see R. Pichon, *Lactance* (1901), 246–66.

² Augustine, *De doctrina Christiana*, II, 40.

reason and the passions, the notion of the sovereign good, the cardinal virtues, the importance of the conscience. Ambrose rightly affirms the originality of Christian morality, but he has assimilated all that the pagan philosophers could offer—which amounts to a great deal. It may be added that Ambrose is indebted to Cicero for his numerous quotations of Aristotle, Theophrastus, Zeno, and many others.¹

St. Augustine's debt to Cicero was more personal. In his *Confessions* he tells how at the age of eighteen his life was transformed by a reading of the dialogue *Hortensius*:

Following the normal order of study I had come to a book of one Cicero, whose tongue practically everyone admires, though not his heart. That particular book is called *Hortensius* and contains an exhortation to philosophy. Quite definitely it changed the direction of my mind, altered my prayers to you, O Lord, and gave me a new purpose and ambition. Suddenly all the vanity I had hoped in I saw as worthless, and with an incredible intensity of desire I longed after immortal wisdom. I had begun that journey upwards by which I was to return to You. . . . I used that book not for the sharpening of my tongue; what won me in it was what it said, not the excellence of its phrasing.

How did I then burn, my God, how did I burn to wing upwards from earthly delights to You . . . the one thing that delighted me in Cicero's exhortation was that I should love, and seek, and win, and hold, and embrace, not this or that philosophical school but Wisdom itself, whatever it might be. The book excited and inflamed me; in my ardour the one thing I found lacking was that the name of Christ was not there.²

The *Hortensius* (now unfortunately lost) does not appear from the fragments to have been an exciting work, and perhaps Augustine has over-dramatised his reactions upon reading it. But he was at an impressionable age; and though this represents primarily a conversion to philosophy and not to religious belief, he is himself in no doubt of its formative importance in his eventual espousal of Christianity.

¹ So Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, XVI, 103. For Ciceronian elements in the *De Officiis Ministrorum*, see the numerous lengthy quotations in P.L. XVI, 43 ff. There are good general comments in Labriolle, *History and Literature of Western Christianity*, trans. Wilson (1924), 30 f.

² *Confessions* III, 4, trans. F. J. Sheed (1951), 33 f. The vital passage reads: *Ille vero liber mutavit affectum meum, et ad te ipsum, Domine, mutavit preces meas et vota ac desideria mea fecit alia*. For a recent analysis of the significance of this chapter, see J. J. O'Meara, *The Young Augustine* (1954), 57-60.

St. Jerome, like St. Augustine, revered Cicero as the chief influence on his literary education. One recalls his famous dream, in which he stood before the judgment seat, and was denounced with the words *Ciceronianus es, non Christianus*—a condemnation of his irritation at the “uncouth style” of the prophets, and his affection for the pagan Romans. And though he records his determination after his dream never again to advert to the Ciceronian treatises (“O Lord, if I ever possess or read worldly books (*codices saeculares*) again, I have denied thee”), his literary formation was now complete. And it was this same Cicero who lent such grace and vigour to his latinity. Jerome was almost forty when at Rome he completed the Vulgate translation of the New Testament, and almost sixty when, in A.D. 404, he brought to fulfilment his thirteen years’ laborious labours on the Old. He aimed, of course, at a faithful and accurate version, for where Scripture is concerned, *et verborum ordo mysterium est*; hence the incorporation of numerous Greek words, the multiplication of participles, the embodiment of such constructions as the Genitive Absolute. Yet in spite of this necessary scruple, it is not fanciful to allot Cicero some credit for that translation of the Bible which played a vital part in the extension of Western Christianity.

Thus, though Cicero attributed to himself only the modest title of translator, his influence has been profound not merely in the inauguration of philosophy in Latin, but also in the development of Christian thought—especially in the fourth century, rightly labelled the *aetas Ciceroniana*.¹

II

But philosophy was not the sole field of studies in which Cicero adapted Greek learning to the expanding Latin culture. The rhetorical treatises—not the specialised disquisitions but those of more general interest, the *De Oratore* and the *Orator*—recall another important debt. These dialogues respectively discuss the nature of eloquence and the characteristics of the perfect orator, topics which in our day have not the central relevance which they had in the city-state, where the *ars eloquendi* was vital for the aspiring politician, especially as self-advertisement in the law-courts was a necessary preliminary to office. Yet the education

¹ The point is developed in E. K. Rand, *Founders of the Middle Ages*.

envisaged by Cicero for the ideal orator could almost comprise the entire curriculum of a modern grammar-school, if only because the basic requirements for the creative minority will be identical in every civilised society—a wide and sympathetic humanism, a capacity for judgment, and the ability to persuade with both the spoken and the written word. Now *eloquentia* in Latin embraces not only oratory but also formal prose and even poetry; and Quintilian, educationally an ardent Ciceronian, explicitly states that he sees no difference between speaking well and writing well; *mihi unum atque idem videtur bene dicere ac bene scribere*.¹

Even when considered at its narrowest, therefore, Roman education was designed to achieve the laudable aim of enabling the pupil to express himself clearly and gracefully both orally and in formal prose. Nor need this be construed as a mere surface virtuosity—the constant temptation today whenever the word “rhetoric” is breathed. To appreciate its fundamental educational value one need only remember the dictum of Isocrates: “The right word is a sure sign of good thinking.”

Yet Cicero was well aware that as an educational programme such an aim, *bene dicere ac bene scribere*, must rest upon solid foundations of wide learning and disinterested curiosity. Though earlier he had appeared to be seduced by the arid specialism of Hellenistic rhetoricians, in his later treatises he is increasingly critical of such uncultured teachers with their petty rule-books. In the spirit of Isocrates he proclaims that the true orator will be thoroughly versed in great literature. But he is not content merely with the discipline of letters; whereas in fourth-century Athens there had been a schism between rhetoric and philosophy with results disastrous to education in the Hellenistic age, Cicero insists on a reconciliation in his programme, and prescribes Plato, Aristotle, and later philosophers for the aspiring orator. Further, the value of historical studies and the importance of a knowledge of law are repeatedly emphasised: the student “must learn civil law, know the public laws, and study ancient history.”²

These are the studies on which Cicero lays greatest emphasis, but he also includes in his educational programme³ mathematics

¹ Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* XII, 10, 51. ² *De Oratore* I, 159: compare I, 18, 46.

³ Outlined at *De Or.* III, 127, in essence the *enkuklios paideia*. For a good critique, A. Gwynn, *Roman Education from Cicero to Quintilian* (1926), 79–122.

(considered by Plato to be the supreme mental discipline), music, and astronomy. It must, however, be admitted that the Roman education paid inadequate attention to science. One thinks, for example, of Tacitus in the *Agricola*, basing his explanation of the long hours of daylight in the far north on the assumption that the earth is flat, in spite of the correct Greek theories long formulated. Yet Cicero is more enlightened than the vast majority of his fellow-Romans in this respect. When Messalla analyses the causes of the decline of eloquence in the early Empire, he looks back to Cicero and expounds his manifold studies, which included geometry, astronomy, and the *rerum motus causasque*; "that remarkable eloquence wells forth from a store of learning, from numerous accomplishments, from an all-round knowledge."¹

This Ciceronian ideal of "all-round knowledge," the *artes liberales*, was of course the basis of the *trivium* (grammar, rhetoric, dialectic) and of the *quadrivium* (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, music) which endured as an educational programme throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, which was the foundation of the Jesuit educational system, and which survived in its essentials up to the nineteenth century. Today it has been largely abandoned in favour of a specialisation by which the most diligent pupil studies only what he does best, and the idler only what extends him least. In this respect the English system, in which specialisation begins at fifteen or sixteen, is particularly vicious; and the problem becomes more acute as the emphasis on technology increases.

In a recent article in *The Tablet*,² Mr. L. Connell of the University of Leeds has some sensible things to say about the neglect of science in Catholic schools and about the over-emphasis on Classical studies. His demands are cogent. One hopes, however, that Christian educationalists like Mr. Connell are aware that the main battle in the next decade will be in the reverse direction. The issue is not the academic one of whether scientific studies are as formative a discipline as the Classics, nor the practical one of job-finding. The central problem is that our children's minds must not be merely tempered to enable them to co-operate constructively in the new technological society, but also educated to recognise and acknowledge the framework of ideas within which Christian humanism has moulded that society.

¹ Tacitus, *Dialogus*, 30.

² 19 April 1958.

This entails a conception of our culture as an organic growth, a reverence for the giants who fostered it (Cicero must be counted amongst them), and a recognition of their multifarious achievement. Should the worst come to the worst, and exclusive alternatives be foisted upon us, we must be prepared to argue that such a humanistic education is superior to a purely scientific training. Cicero himself would have defended this order of priorities. Yet his humanism embraces the enthusiastic study not only of literature, philosophy, and law, but also of science. And it is to this Ciceronian conception of the educated man, which lays the foundation of a wide and disinterested knowledge and crowns it with *eloquentia*, that all sane educators of the next two thousand years, as of the last, will direct their vision.

A MATRIMONIAL THEOLOGY

By

J. H. CREHAN

AT THE LAMBETH CONFERENCE the committee which deliberated on the family in contemporary society had an American chairman and sixteen of its thirty-eight members were from the United States, as against seven English bishops. It is true that there were a number of colonial bishops who would naturally take the English point of view, but the preponderance of American bishops may have had something to do with the resultant emphasis on the responsibility of individual Christian couples for the planning of their family and the reticence about the principles they are to apply in making such decisions. Just before the Lambeth meeting there was issued a preliminary survey of the problems of *The Family in Contemporary Society* which had been commissioned by the Archbishop of Canterbury as an aid to the deliberations of Lambeth, and in this pilot work an American contribution laid special emphasis on the undesirability of binding moral directives:

For good and sufficient reasons this Church of ours has been generally disinclined to bind upon the conscience of its members

specific directives for specific ethical situations. . . . The American Episcopalian is surrounded by friends and colleagues and sometimes by members of his own family who, belonging to Churches of authoritarian character, have no apparent problems of conscience, for they have been told exactly what to think and do in virtually every situation.

No one will find that the resolution (No. 115) on family planning which finally met with the approval of the whole Lambeth Conference, after having been roughed out by the committee on the family, is in any danger of imposing an authoritarian directive. In fact it leaves the whole problem to the Christian conscience of husband and wife. It is perhaps thought by those who have read the *Report*¹ hurriedly that the principles which will guide the individual conscience have been left lying about in its pages so that, on the "Teach yourself" principle, Anglican husbands and wives will be able to find adequate if not compelling guidance in their problems. But this is far from being true. At least two contradictions of moral principle can be found there, both of them quite fundamental. There is a hesitancy to pronounce on the relative importance ethically of the two ends of marriage, which are generally described as procreation of children and the mutual fulfilment and completion of the partners. Eventually the two ends or functions are said (p. 149) to be equal, and it is made quite clear that they are not rightly separated (pp. 144, 145 and 146). A third end—that of educating the children born and of giving them an enduring home—is added to the two, and it is repeatedly said that these three ends or purposes must be kept together, that they are "interwoven," that the commanding problem is "to maintain a right relationship among the three great purposes of marriage," while the greatest danger is that "of separating the great triad of purposes which family life exists to serve." All this is reasonable enough, but it is contradicted by what the *Report* says elsewhere:

It is utterly wrong to urge that, unless children are specifically desired, sexual intercourse is of the nature of sin. It is also wrong to say that such intercourse ought not to be engaged in except with the willing intention to procreate children (p. 147).

If the ends of marriage are to be held together, it is hard to see how it can be so wicked of Catholics to suggest that the separating

¹ *The Lambeth Conference, 1958* (S. P. C. K. 7s 6d).

of them is sinful.¹ Perhaps the Anglican theologians have not made a sufficiently broad survey of the possible attitudes of will towards a purpose or motive that is presented to it. There may be an attitude of acceptance, of not excluding the motive, which a couple could have even while they did not cherish it with joy. But it is very hard to see how on the Anglicans' own principles the exclusion of one main purpose of marriage should not be called sinful. If the "willing intention," at whatever level, is absent, moral disorder then begins.

A second contradiction arises out of the warning which the *Report* issues to those who have large families:

Those who carelessly and improvidently bring children into the world, trusting in an unknown future or a generous society to care for them, need to make a rigorous examination of their lack of concern for their children and for the society of which they are a part (p. 146).

There is a grave omission in this otherwise reasonable piece of advice. No mention is made here of the duty which the parents have to God. If they realise, as would be right, that each new human soul can give new glory to God, and if they wish by the procreation of children to repair their own inability to love and glorify God as is fitting, then that motive is a worthy one. Of course, the welfare of the children and the claims of the society into which they come have to be considered, but it is somewhat surprising that in a religious document the God-regarding motive is not given any notice at all. Elsewhere (p. 151) the *Report* shows that it is not unaware of the existence of this motive, for it says:

Only the bond of the redeemed, in Christ, is closer than that between husband and wife; yet, by the same token, marriage is not a final end in itself but must serve the body of Christ.

If this spiritual teaching had been brought to bear on the problem of the large family, one would have no cavil here, but it has been strangely neglected at that point, and how the ordinary Anglican is to be enabled to form his conscience on so important

¹ There is a world of difference between the acceptance by married folk of the exclusion of this end through act of God (such as sterility) or of nature (by the incidence of old age) and the choosing to exclude the end. The *Report* is not dealing with these particular cases, but is proposing a general maxim. It seems in fact to be replying to the teaching of Pius XI that "there must always be preserved the essential nature of this act and hence its proper direction towards the primary end of marriage" (*Casti connubii*, 59).

a matter does not appear. "Ways of family planning that are mutually acceptable to husband and wife" are what the resolution (No. 115) of the whole Conference called for, but there is a surprising reluctance to state the principles on which such decisions are to be taken. Had it been made clear that the Christian duty of loving God with all one's mind and heart was a duty that is never completely carried out, being in fact something in the nature of a mathematical limit in the moral life towards which men tend but which they never reach, then there would be more chance of the decisions that will be taken in consequence of this *Report* being really Christian.

All the attention given to the problem of family planning draws men away from considering the much graver question which the Anglican church has to face at the present time. Divorce, and the attitude of the church authorities towards the remarriage of those who have been divorced, are topics that, one would have thought, call for immediate decision. Dr. A. R. Winnett, in his careful survey of the variations in the Anglican attitude to divorce,¹ brings out how that attitude hardened between the Lambeth Conference of 1888 and that of 1908, so that in the latter year a resolution was carried (by 87 against 84 votes) which said:

When an innocent person has by means of a court of law divorced a spouse for adultery and desires to enter into another contract of marriage, it is undesirable that such a contract should receive the blessing of the Church.

By a paradox, it was the growth of the critical spirit in regard to the gospels which promoted this hardening, for when the critics had satisfied themselves that Mark was prior to Matthew, they had by that very fact removed the chief ground of the partisans of easier divorce, since the prohibition of divorce in Mark's gospel is absolute, while Matthew records the teaching in a more ambiguous way. The 1958 *Report* is content to print in an Appendix some resolutions of the 1948 meeting wherein the treatment of the remarried is reserved to the bishop of the diocese, while room is left for regional or provincial differences of practice. It is recommended (resolution 119) that these decisions should be studied in every province of the Anglican church, while an American procedure for declaring certain marriages

¹ *Divorce and Remarriage in Anglicanism*, by A. R. Winnett (Macmillan 30s).

that have ended in divorce to be null from the beginning is (resolution 118) commended for further consideration. If Dr. Winnett's book is used by the prelates who are to give this further consideration to the fate of the divorced, it will not give them much comfort. They will be able to trace in it the sorry tale of the gradual wresting of control of marriage and the married state out of the hands of the Church by the state through the last four centuries. Ralph Sadler, secretary to Thomas Cromwell, is the first to follow his royal master in obtaining a parliamentary divorce and thereafter the Northampton case, the Stawell case and the Fuljambe case, provide a line of precedents which point the way to the Act of 1857, which is itself the source of present ills. If an attempt is to be made towards retrenchment, it could hardly be effective except by some kind of renouncement, made at the time of marriage, by both parties, which would deprive them of their right as citizens to seek in the future a civil divorce. If the state recognised that such an undertaking had legal force, marriage in church would be strengthened, but the numbers of those who sought it would fall. In Portugal the Catholic Church has agreed to such a provision, by the Concordat of 1940, and so far the arrangement is working well. But would it succeed for Anglicans here?

One may be glad that the Lambeth Conference did not seek to exalt above the duty of procreation the personal relationship aspect of marriage, for then it would have left itself no defence against the patrons of homosexuality. Some of the theologians who contributed to the pilot document encouraged it to go in this direction, but they have not prevailed. One may, however, regret that the suggestion of resolution 112, that "the idea of the human family is rooted in the Godhead," was not more fully worked out. Crude comparisons of father, mother and child with the Three Persons of the Trinity are sometimes put forward by untheological writers even among Catholics, but they are dogmatically indefensible. The Lambeth suggestion seems to be that the creative, redemptive, and sanctifying power of God supplies this parallel, but no attempt is made to work this out, and it does not seem possible to justify it theologically. It would have been more useful to deepen the understanding of the parallel which St. Paul gives between the married pair on the one hand and the Second Adam and His bride the Church on the other.

A HERMIT OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY¹

By
MICHAEL HANBURY

A PART from members of the Carthusian or Camaldolese Orders, who blend the eremitic with the coenobitic life, hermits would seem to be almost extinct today, so far at least as the Catholic Church and Western Christendom are concerned. Occasionally, it is true, one hears of some group of hermits in remote parts—probably in Spain—or may be of some individual recluse in an unfrequented part of our own country; but such reports are usually vague and lacking in detail. This does not mean, of course, that all attempts to lead the solitary life are at an end. External solitude is, after all, only a means to the far more essential solitude of the soul and spirit. So classic an author as Fr. Augustine Baker, after saying in *Sancta Sophia*, that “the only proper school of contemplation is solitude,” goes on to insist that external solitude, unless joined to abstraction or solitude of the spirit, is rather a hindrance than a help to spiritual progress. In these days, as the author of an excellent modern book on the subject² has written, “The lines of solitaries . . . are cast mostly in crowded places.”

Nevertheless if, even now, God calls a man to go literally into the desert, it is clear that he may do outstanding good by his prayers and example. Charles de Foucauld has taught us that. De Foucauld has been dead for more than forty years, and apart from him I can think only of one Catholic solitary who has gained some fame in the twentieth century—the subject of this book. Mgr. John Hawes, better known as Fra Jerome, died only two years ago, and it is on his second anniversary (26 June) that I find myself struggling to record some of my impressions on reading his Life.

The genesis of the book is worth noting. Fra Jerome (I shall usually call him that) himself entrusted Mr. Anson with the task of putting it together; and as all hermits worthy of the name

¹ *The Hermit of Cat Island*, by Peter F. Anson (Burns and Oates 21s).

² *The House of the Spirit*, by F. M. Pohl, 1933.

inevitably shrink from self-advertisement, the fact needs explaining. What happened was that Fra Jerome's bishop in Australia, where he had been labouring strenuously for more than twenty years, in releasing him most reluctantly to try his hermit vocation in the Bahamas, put him under obedience to write his autobiography fully and in detail. I can give Fra Jerome's own version of this as, writing to me in November 1949, he referred to the matter as follows:

So you have perused P. F. A.'s "Life and Letters" of the man who so often looked back from the Plough and then became a grey penitent. I tremble and shudder now when I hear mention of it!—nor have I seen or read it—as I might tear it all up!

I've quite forgotten what all my early letters contained, although I loyally co-operated in furnishing my inquisitor with any special or lost details he required—out of Holy Obedience to my bishop (Bishop O'Collins, now of Ballarat) who laid that on me—to write my Memoirs—as a condition of permission to follow my eremitical vocation. I got on so slow—and then P. F. A. offered to type them out; what little there was I had put into autobiographical form. It was a dear old friend and fellow-traveller from Anglicanism, C. S. Selby-Hall (formerly Vicar of Sunbury-on-Thames) that had saved up all my poor letters, and sent them straight off to P. F. A.

When the biography was more or less finished up to 1948, the Hermit quite understandably forbade publication before his death, so it had to be shelved for seven or eight years.

It will be seen that Mr. Anson was well off for first-hand material for his task; and those who have seen Fra Jerome's long letters and graphic sketches will realise this more clearly still. Further, the biographer was greatly helped by sharing so many tastes and experiences in common with his subject. Hermit, architect, Franciscan and missionary, Fra Jerome would seem to have had four vocations besides his sacerdotal one, and of three at least Mr. Anson can write as an expert. Need one add that when it came to describing the Hermit's sea voyages he was equally at home? Perhaps, again, this Life would never have come to be written if one of his own books¹ had not helped Fra Jerome to clarify his ideas.

The book excites many reflections, first of all perhaps that the title role in Fra Jerome's long life did not begin till he was

¹ *The Quest of Solitude* (1932).

past sixty—an age when most men are thinking of hard-earned retirement. He was retiring too, certainly, but the retirement was to be more arduous than even his previous activities. The hermit vocation would seem to have come to him as the crown of a long and adventurous career, spent chiefly in divers apostolic labours; and his earlier life alone would provide matter for a far from commonplace biography. De Foucauld's example notwithstanding, probably most of us would think of a hermit as a rather one-track individual: if so, Fra Jerome's versatility and range of gifts will come as a surprise. The present Bishop of Ballarat, Fra Jerome's Ordinary for nine years, testifies as follows:

I always found Mgr. Hawes a most colourful character. He is an extraordinary person. It went very hard with me to allow him to stay in the Bahamas, I grew to like him much, and I, as the Bishop, could never have accomplished the many works in the diocese of Geraldton without him. He was an architect, painter, sculptor, stonemason, decorator, poet, horseman and horse-breeder. . . .

To this list, Mr. Anson adds that he might have made his fortune as a cartoonist, a thought that had often struck the present writer. To turn to another field of activity, the narrative of some of Fra Jerome's voyages in the Bahamas shows him as a skilful and intrepid sailor. A fellow-student at the Beda said of him that "he had every talent save that of languages."

Mr. Anson devotes roughly seventy pages to Fra Jerome's earlier life and a hundred to his final fifteen years, spent mainly on Cat Island. A glance at the Hermit's earlier history may now be of interest as showing the stages by which he arrived at his goal. Born 11 September 1876 at Richmond, Surrey, then "a small town in the country filled with stately Georgian and Queen Anne mansions," John Hawes was the son of a London solicitor, and the family would seem to have been rather specially religious in an Evangelical way.

We do not know if John showed any attraction to solitude as a boy, but some of his tastes were formed early. A large box of bricks given to him on his fifth birthday greatly delighted the future architect, and at the same age a taste of drawing showed itself, as did also the exceptional love for animals, which later he regarded as part of his Franciscan vocation. At King's School, Canterbury, the cathedral awakened an enthusiasm for Gothic, and when he was sixteen his father had him articled to a firm of

London architects. For five years John remained with them, though dissatisfied, because the firm's work consisted mainly of plans for banks and schools, while his own heart was set on the design of churches. In these years he visited several "Roman" churches, and at the Oratory had a sudden intuition that he ought to become a Catholic. But he argued himself out of the idea.

As soon as he was twenty-one, John showed initiative as well as talent by starting work on his own with some cottages at Bognor. A model for a church which he exhibited the next year at the Royal Academy had important effects by bringing him into touch with a Bishop Hornby, a retired Anglican colonial bishop, who not only gave him his first church building commission, but before long persuaded him to take Anglican Orders, and then a few years later drew him as a missionary to the Bahamas.

Meanwhile other strong influences had been at work. When he was twenty-two, John Hawes underwent what he always regarded as a genuine religious conversion; and about the same time he was profoundly affected by the reading of Paul Sabatier's *Life of St. Francis of Assisi*. From then onwards he yearned to imitate the Little Poor Man as closely as possible, even thinking of becoming a tramp after the manner of St. Benedict Joseph Labre. Even before his Ordination at Lincoln in 1903, he had made friends with the future Caldey Benedictines, then at Pains-thorpe in Yorkshire; and when the Community moved to Caldey in 1906, he went there by the Abbot's invitation to be both novice and architect of future abbey buildings. It was understood that in some way the Caldey novitiate would serve as probation for the Franciscan life he hoped to follow. At Caldey he was given the religious name of Jerome, to which he reverted long after as a Franciscan tertiary on Cat Island. He left with ideas of founding an Anglican Franciscan Brotherhood, but, failing, went before long as a missionary to the Bahamas. Here, among other work, he built several Anglican churches and gained the lasting affection of his flock. But now his days in the Anglican communion were numbered: intermittent doubts of ten years or more past crystallised into firm conviction, and after three years in the Bahamas he left for New York, to be received into the Church by Fr. Paul Francis of Graymoor, Founder of the Society of the Atonement, which had but lately taken the same step.

Received on 19 March 1911, the next year found John Hawes studying for the priesthood at the Beda. He had hopes of returning to the Bahamas after his Ordination, but Bishop Kelly of Geraldton, West Australia, captured this very promising recruit for his diocese, which he termed "the biggest, poorest and wildest on the southern continent." Poverty always appealed to Fr. Hawes' Franciscan spirit.

Then began twenty-four years of devoted work, in the twin roles of missionary priest and busy architect. Architect, indeed, is an understatement, for he had sometimes to be architect, clerk of works and stone-mason in one. His account of his work in building St. Mary's, Mullewa, which Mr. Anson calls the most extraordinary church he ever designed, and says that it "expressed his whole personality and his eclectic taste in matters of art," is startling but typical. He writes:

Day after day, toiling with sore and cracked hands, tormented with flies and the scorching summer sun, and clothed in lime-covered rags, all my interests are now concentrated on this my latest church. Some of the piers and walls are now ten feet above ground. God only knows how I've toiled and sweated over it, all through the sweltering days of summer. Often I have worked alone; mixing the mortar, fetching my stones, often aching with lumbago and hardly able to lift a stone without groaning. Often I've had to knock off and go indoors to lie down on my bed for a quarter of an hour and then drag myself out to work again—to face the sun and the flies once more. But once I get going the enthusiasm and intoxication of the work carry me on. I become too tired to eat anything except with a great effort. People remark that I am growing thin.

In addition to an informing chapter, "The Artist at Work," which is illustrated with several photographs of Fra Jerome's best buildings, Mr. Anson gives a list of all his principal designs, even those not carried out. He was responsible for about a dozen churches in Australia, including the cathedral at Geraldton; and also for a number of convents, schools and other buildings. Pope Pius XI, in nominating him a domestic prelate in 1937, gave special mention to his design for Geraldton. The new Monsignor acknowledged the dignity with all due gratitude, but wrote to a friend that he hoped to "shed his fine purple feathers," and to end his days in the Bahamas in a patched old habit.

Fra Jerome began his solitary life on Cat Island in the spring of 1940, when the outer world was becoming more and more engrossed by the fast-developing war. With native help he built a three-roomed hermitage, on the hill he had been inspired to choose when sighting it from a mail steamer. The hermitage was tiny, his cell six feet by four, the kitchen four feet square; but it was strong enough to withstand hurricanes. During the process of the building Fra Jerome used a nearby cave for sleeping in.

Thus settled, he gave himself to a life of poverty, solitude and penance, leaving it to God to show if He wished him to undertake missionary or other external work. It seems that God did, and Fra Jerome did much costing and fruitful apostolic work among the natives, for whom he built four churches in different parts of the island. He described his native flock as "simple, unsophisticated people," living in great poverty, but said also that their standard of morality was low. By degrees, too, Fra Jerome felt himself called to undertake very considerable architectural work, chiefly for the Benedictines of Nassau, who had spiritual charge of the Bahamas. To the prayer, fasting and penance, on which the Hermit's life was based, he now joined work as strenuous as any he had previously undertaken in Australia. It is not surprising that Fra Jerome wrote of people who professed to envy his "quiet, untroubled existence," his "romantic solitude," with a touch of impatience! Life for him was not only exhausting physically; it was often a very grim spiritual struggle, a realisation of St. Benedict's words that "the hermit goes forth to the single-handed combat of the desert." His conflict seemed to become more grievous as the years passed and his health failed; yet he had full inward assurance that he was where God wanted him to be, sharing in the sorrows of Gethsemani.

In regard to one particular, Mr. Anson strikes me as somewhat misleading. I think he makes too much of the trouble caused to the Hermit by publicity during his last years. Thus he writes:

After 1950 it is not untrue to say that Fra Jerome almost regretted that he had ever built that romantic hermitage on the highest hill in the Bahamas, much as he loved it. Instead of enabling him to live a solitary and hidden life, it had brought him right into the full glare of the limelight. He found himself a "star" and regarded as a public entertainer.

Other sentences convey the same idea, and the point is important

in so far as it implies that Fra Jerome's attempt to lead the solitary life was more or less frustrated. May one dare to suggest that Mr. Anson has here, oddly enough, been misled by the Hermit's gift of humorous invective and exaggeration when describing things and persons distasteful to him?

I was privileged to hear regularly from Fra Jerome during the last twelve years of his life, and although from about 1950, when his health worsened a good deal, he wrote much of his pains in body and soul, he said very little about this supposedly grievous trial of publicity. A few extracts from his letters will show, I think, that he by no means despaired of being able to lead a solitary and hidden life after the date mentioned.

On 6 December 1950 he wrote: "I am (or hope to become) more of a hermit now than ever, since our new Vicar Apostolic . . . has taken pity on my infirmities and appointed a priest to take over from me."

In November 1952: "I am more of a solitary now than ever, so that is helpful."

On 23 July 1953: "I am happy to say I rarely have any tourist visitors calling at the hermitage now. Fortunately Cat Island is very difficult to get to. There is such an *atrocious* (motor-vessel) mail service—people *look* at the vessel in the docks in Nassau, and that is enough—indeed they could smell it! The dirt and vermin!"

On 13 December 1954 (describing a fall he had had, when he had cut his head on a rock, and it had bled for ten hours): "No one came near the Hermitage, so after three days I struggled down to get help. After that I did not leave the Hermitage for eight weeks—was so weak—and am still very giddy when I try to walk a little. The other priest came up the hill to anoint me. Often I see no one for three or four days."

That hardly suggests the "full glare of the limelight." Fra Jerome did say to me once or twice that he was overwhelmed with unwelcome letters, but I cannot think he found it a very serious distraction.

If I had not already exceeded the limits of space allowed, I would have liked to combat what seems to me a similar misconception, to wit, that Fra Jerome's architectural and missionary activities prevented him from being a true solitary. This idea showed itself in some of the obituary notices written after his death.

REVIEWS

ECCENTRIC ABBOT

Abbot Extraordinary: Memoirs of Aelred Carlyle, O.S.B., by Peter Anson
(The Faith Press 25s).

ABBOT CARLYLE was with Fr. Ignatius of Llanthony, the two great eccentric Anglican Benedictines who tried their hand and their vocations as well as their patrons and subscribers in efforts to restore the religious life in the State Church.

The one ended with Rome, the other got as far as Greek Orders. Their eccentricities and struggles, their semi-miraculous careers, their violent controversies and their press-fame led them far from the contemplative life they desired. In vain Fr. Ignatius retreated to the Welsh hills. In vain Fr. Aelred disappeared overseas to Caldey Island. Many a busy diocesan, many an active apostle in the world has passed into comparative oblivion after being scarcely known by the crowds around them. But these two auto-Benedictines could not hide their lights under bushels. Ignatius fluttered through the Victorian era like an *ignis fatuus*. Aelred convulsed Edwardian and post-Edwardian ecclesiastical gossip. What was he up to next? was a common query not only amongst his monks but amongst his well-wishers in two Churches. He was tolerated because two Churches were continually angling for him. The last phase lay between Bishop Gore of Oxford and Dom Bede Camm of Downside. In 1913 Aelred and his community accepted Rome, and it might be expected that he would find not only peace and quiet but some pretence of contemplation, for Rome has a way of sinking the unruly and eccentric. But no! Aelred as a Roman priest and Abbot was only beginning his world-spread career. As his monks said: there was never a dull moment!

It was at this stage that he crossed my tracks in America. In 1917 I had the honour of visiting Cardinal O'Connell of Boston. His Eminence came to me with his face flushed with laughter and described meeting the converted Abbot who had steered into him as a fellow-prelate and launched into his plans so vivaciously and so fantastically that the Cardinal accepted him as one of those jokes which Providence sometimes plays on the official Curia.

The Cardinal had been much amused by one fact—"The Abbot's ring was so much bigger and so much more flashy than mine that I felt he must be something terrific on the other side." And he subsided into laughter. I tried to explain the inner workings of Anglican pseudo-monkery, which can only be explained as the smoulderings of a great volcano of religious life extinguished in the sixteenth century.

Abbot Aelred brought over most of his community to Rome, who

gave him a free hand. Orders were conferred in a year, but life was still short for such a dreamer. His contempt for money was such that he left his Abbey in financial chaos, appealing to the faithful to guarantee his dreams of abbatial splendour. When pious works (the sale of incense, goats, stained glass and herbs) failed to support the community he resigned and fled to British Columbia leaving Cistercians to stabilise Caldey Island.

In America he developed a mission amongst the outcasts, prisoners and seafarers. This made him an apostle in the Archdiocese of Vancouver and an example to the missionary clergy. He returned with a totem-pole from his Indian friends, a gold key and the Freedom of Vancouver City after thirty years in the West.

As a pioneer and a priest of the wilderness and quayside he had been an immense success. His love for his fellow-men equalled his love for ritual splendour. He seemed to incarnate the frustrated thirst which Englishmen have, when they go liturgical, to take up the roadside life of the Franciscan Friar with holidays as a mitred Abbot.

His vocation as a monk always simmered in his optimistic soul. He made one desperate effort to be a Carthusian in Miraflores, Spain, before the end, but it was brief failure. By then he realised that he was not intended to be a hermit in a cell at all and he retired to his own first foundation, who finally took him back as an oblate at Prinknash and buried him as an Abbot at which he had only played. The Church had reckoned his great work for souls and passed him on to the "nurseries of Heaven."

The Biography is great fun and will be read by Catholics with a sense of humour. The Anglican settlements at Caldey Island and Painsthorpe in Yorkshire had been carried on with immense difficulty and increasing debts. For a long time there were monks without Mass until the American Episcopal Bishop of Fond du Lac gave ordination to the Abbot and his acolyte. Strange to say Archbishop Temple of Canterbury also signed his "*Approved F. Cantuar*" next to an emblazoned Cross which could be taken as part of his signature. There was something miraculous in these ordinations for we read: "On 12 November Bishop Grafton ordained Abbot Aelred deacon in Fond du Lac Cathedral. Three days later he raised him to the priesthood in St. Peter's Church, Ripon"!!! And this was before the days of aeroplanes across the Atlantic.

There was a medieval quest for relics, and, thanks to some spirit-writing effected by Mr. Bond at Glastonbury, the bones of Abbot Whytting were recovered for veneration. The only effect, which might prove they really were the relics of an Abbot who died for Rome under the Tudors, was that their possession was sufficiently potent to turn the Community of Caldey to Rome.

There were no connections between Caldey and Anglicanism except that the *Church Times* was read in the refectory and the soul of Frederick Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury, was prayed for every night.

On conversion the Abbot had a wonderful trip to Rome where Pius X gave him all possible dispensations. He was the *enfant terrible* and the spoilt child of the Churches whom he seemed to hypnotise by his importance as the only Abbot of which the Church of England could boast. He failed to settle down as a Roman Abbot. He was haunted by debts and lawsuits as much as by ghosts. He tried to turn his monks into actors sufficient to create an English Oberammergau. At one moment he decided to turn his monks into Trappists. Then came his breakdown and resignation. Bankruptcy was impending and he escaped into the "free air of Canada." Having obtained what the Church wisely provided on such occasions, called "an indult of ex-claustration," he sank into the wilderness, lived amongst Indians with whom he became an instant success. It was the Archbishop of Vancouver who had the faith to "make use of this fine but baffling priest." Even so there was a Carthusian interlude. Fr. Aelred appeared at Parkminster, and then at Miraflores in Spain. In a few weeks he realised that "devil a monk was he," far less an Abbot. He settled down for fifteen years in Vancouver. Archbishop Duke set him down to his real mission. His compassion for the unfortunate rose like a fount of light in his heart. He was obviously exactly what Fr. Dolling had been in the English slums. He could win the wildest Teddy boys by his dominating personality. He had the perfect qualities for a Chaplain to the gaols. He could take a convict to the scaffold and see him over the gulf, merely saying "Look at me, Sonny."

The authorities of Church and State realised that they had a priceless apostle at their service. He celebrated his silver jubilee as a priest in 1939. He reached England in 1951 followed by the love and hero-worship of British Columbia. It was reckoned that 10,000 men and women had benefited by his apostolic powers in the prison, apart from police courts and Borstal homes. Roman and Anglican Bishops, Judges and Wardens swelled his triumphant leave-taking. The Church had been justified by the kindness and wise appreciation with which she treated this Peter Pan of ecclesiastical life. Having accomplished a work of magnificent success for her, he returned to England, became an oblate-brother in the community he had founded as an Anglican—renewed his monastic vows and was buried with all the honours of a mitred abbot.

This book will give great amusement and still greater edification as reading in refectories.

What an "extraordinary Abbot"! but then he took the risk of

plunging into an extraordinary Church, and the spiritual results proved extraordinary too. St. Ignatius would have loved and curbed him but he would have upset Farm Street.

SHANE LESLIE

IDEALS OF LOVE

Ideals to Live By, by R. Nash, S.J. (Gill 8s 6d).

In Remembrance of Me, by Mgr. A. G. Martimont; translated by Dom A. Dean, O.S.B. (Challoner Publications 15s, paper 11s 6d).

The Enemies of Love by Dom Aelred Watkin, O.S.B. (Burns and Oates 10s 6d).

The Pattern of Love, by W. P. Wylie (Longmans 16s).

FR. NASH'S BOOK is directly meant for the layman, and it is not so much a record of what a priest, giving the Exercises, might say, as a study "of some of the principles which moulded St. Ignatius," and he interestingly quotes modern authors in illustration. He could, too, have set Mr. Somerset Maugham's description of the Exercises (in *Don Fernando*), where a retreat begins by shattering a man's imagination by the thought of hell so that the Jesuit may get control over that "unstable and wilful thing, the soul of man," alongside of Ramon Navarro's declaration that when he felt the pettinesses of the world about to smother him, he went to find "refreshment" in a retreat. Mr. W. Sargant quotes this in his *Battle for the Mind*, a frightening account of the "physiology of conversion and brain-washing," though even this falls short of the ghastly attempt to substitute one personality for another, described in the terrifying novel, *One*. Mgr. Martimont's book, translated into simple and dignified English, is doubly useful since it shows how a man should incorporate his prayer-life into that of the Church, and because it insists on that "Second Table," the Scriptures, with which the Liturgy makes warp and woof. This book is rightly said to serve the higher classes of schools, for the instruction of converts, and for the comfort of those who wish no part of their prayers to be just phrase-making. Dom Aelred's book is very satisfying though he does not discuss the biology of human love, i.e., why people "fall in love," especially if they do so "at first sight." He examines the birth and growth of love, and how emotion may actually lessen as love itself grows deeper. Enemies of love may be a sense of insecurity, jealousy, possessiveness, self-indulgence, false romance. Tests of love may be unrequited love, or even the death of love; so an asceticism of love is needed ("the chastity" of the priest is not mere celibacy; mere physical "conquest," as they say, is no climax but a collapse): love's triumph is reached when love, in any of

its forms, is a true image, "after its kind," of Christ's love for the Church and God's love for all created things. Thus all love is an ascent towards our destiny; even a caricature cannot be *quite* unlike reality, which pride always is. The author understands human nature even in the most grotesque of its antics; but never does he allow the idea of love to be cheapened, nor yet at once demand that we should appreciate the mystical heights to which it summons us. Mr. Wylie insists that "public opinion" now holds that one divorce is allowable, if not normal: it is the *refusal* of a divorce asked for that is wrong. But the Roman Church, Anglicans (if loyal to their formularies) and some others regard marriage as indissoluble (Mr. Wylie, following Mr. C. S. Lewis, calls these collectively "Mother Kirk"—to our taste, cheeky rather than "apt"). But the world now tells the Church that it discards the strait-waistcoat into which it has been "cajoled, bribed or bullied," because it has discovered Romantic Love. In this matter, the Church has been "caught napping"; she turns a blind eye to such love; she draws her skirts aside: "dare one suggest that she has never lost a certain air of spinsterishness?" Now when was this "discovery" made? Apparently in the early Middle Ages: till then marriage had been a utilitarian contract (Mr. Wylie himself would not risk saying (as the "jacket" falsely does) that "the defining of love by a compact is, by origin, a decree of the Christian Church"). But Homer knew of married love—Hector and Andromache: so did Vergil and so did Catullus (who certainly knew every other kind too): from the Old Testament, Jacob's wooing of Rachel is mentioned, but not Elkanah: "Am I not more to thee than ten sons?": even prudish annotators never said that the Canticum or the psalm *Eructavit* were exclusively allegorical. In short, Mr. Wylie will admit that "romantic love" has always existed; that during exceptionally corrupt periods there have always been reactions towards extremes of asceticism; that when romantic love was not written about, almost nothing was written; when "civilisation" softened, it did so in every direction, literature, music, architecture, emotion; that neo-Manichaeism, so to call it, can be paralleled by Jansenism and that both have left long-lasting smears upon sentiment. He seems to confuse the Church's duty of teaching with the confessor's role as giver of advice: he says that "no one ever talks . . . no one ever seems to tell. . . ." Just what, in my experience, every sensible confessor or friend always does say: no Catholic dreams of saying that temptation is in itself sinful; or that sexual sin is the worst of all sins and admits no grades of "malice," and in fine, we grant that he is on the side of "no-divorce" once the Great Experiment of marriage has been entered on. But when he recognises that no one is perfection, and that the lady one marries is an Acceptable Variant, and that if one falls in love with someone else one ought not to be told

to "snap out of it, it's all imagination," but "you have merely met another acceptable variant, no nearer perfection than the one you are bound to," and that "if and when the Church can learn to speak like this" (in terms of Acceptable Variants) "the world may perhaps listen to her more respectfully" . . . alas, my smile becomes a grin, and I think that even a maiden aunt (let alone Mother Kirk) would be right if she put her brat across her knee and spanked him good and hard. But, despite a lot of verbiage, and choosing the late Charles Williams for prophet and evangelist, he *is* on the side of St. Paul!

C. C. MARTINDALE

NEW LIGHT ON ECKHART

Meister Eckhart: Selected Treatises and Sermons. Translated from Latin and German with an Introduction and Notes, by James M. Clark and John V. Skinner (Faber 21s).

THE STUDY in England of Eckhart and of that great school of German mystics among whom he, with all his faults, must still be reckoned the first, owes a great debt to Professor Clark, a debt which increases almost every year: and now he and his collaborator have produced an anthology of translations, two of the German and eight Latin sermons, and four German and two Latin treatises. Several of these are now for the first time translated into English, and they are introduced by a succinct account of Eckhart's life, works, and stormy posthumous history which is marked by the objective accuracy which distinguishes Professor Clark. He rightly stresses the provisional nature of any conclusions which may even now be reached: for one thing, we must wait until the great critical edition of the works, now at last in progress, is completed. But even when we have everything which a scientific modern recension of all the known manuscripts can tell us, we shall still be faced with many questions, some of them permanently unanswerable. What kinds of "sermons" are these? In recent years we have learned much, to take two extreme and opposing cases, from experts on the writings of St. Bernard about sermons preached in the vernacular but recorded in Latin, or never intended for a viva voce delivery, from the surviving records of St. Vincent Ferrer of a great popular preacher who need never have set pen to paper; and we should today realise that the medieval sermon and colloquy can represent forms as disparate as are, for example, the "letters" of Mme de Sévigné and those in *Pamela*. Next comes the problem of the transmission of the text: and in the Introduction to the present work there are salutary words of caution about the reliance which we can place on any manuscript, especially of the vernacular works, and a valuable

discussion of the reasons why the German treatises here translated may be regarded as genuine. And, throughout the Introduction and the brief but valuable notes to the translations, we are constantly reminded of the greatest problem of all, how this "master teaching truth" could have been led into the errors which finally were condemned. This is a grievous matter, to which no one who reveres the medieval mystics of the West can be indifferent: and all such students will find in this work a lucid, calm, unprejudiced statement which will well serve their needs. It is much to be hoped that in due course Professor Clark and Mr. Skinner will give us an authoritative English version of Eckhart's whole production: until then, this report on the work in progress deserves our gratitude and our serious attention.

ERIC COLLEDGE

TEACH US TO PRAY

Happiness through Prayer, by Karl Rahner, S.J. (Clonmore and Reynolds 9s 6d).

The Lord's Prayer, by Romano Guardini (Pantheon Books \$2.75).

Pledge of Glory: Eucharistic Meditations, by Dom Eugene Vandeur (Newman Press \$3).

Conversation with Christ, by Peter Thomas Rohrbach, O.C.D. (Geoffrey Chapman 12s 6d).

EDUCATED CATHOLICS are becoming increasingly conscious of the fact that their religious development tends to lag behind their intellectual and technical knowledge. Many of them are uncomfortably aware that, in the process of becoming experts in a particular field of secular learning, they suffer, religiously, from retarded growth. This "felt need" is not always articulate; and it sometimes finds expression in requests for more complete, more adult religious instruction, for sermons on a higher level, for competently directed study-groups, and so on. But basically it is the need for true development, growth in the interior life—the need for true wisdom; in a word, the need for a life of prayer.

If this need is to be fulfilled, there must be a right understanding of what prayer is, of how the life of prayer is possible in the modern world, of how the Church's teaching on prayer is to be adapted to varying temperaments and circumstances. The four books under review each attempt to meet some aspect of this need, to help to this right understanding.

Happiness through Prayer answers this need most fully; it is a practical treatise on the living of the interior life. In his chapter on Prayer for Forgiveness, after pointing out that Baptism marks the beginning of a

man's spiritual life, Fr. Rahner draws the distinction between what is traditionally known as the first and second conversions—Baptism, and the acceptance of "the great and decisive task laid on us by our Baptism; to become Christians, that is, to accept God by a free decision of our innermost being, with our whole heart and mind." And he goes on to show that this involves our living in a state of perfect contrition, in which we constantly and repeatedly acknowledge our sinfulness; not because of an over-powering sense of guilt, but because of our sight of self in the presence of consuming holiness of the God who fills us with His grace.

Fr. Rahner does not make light of the difficulties which are inseparable from the effort of living this life. He is emphatic that daily prayer can be as dreary and monotonous as the stuff of our daily lives; that so often it appears to us to be mere lip-service, in which nothing is accomplished except the ineffectual battling with weariness and indifference—a fight with inherent selfishness. Its virtues are fidelity and reliability; it reflects an unselfish, unrewarded service of God. It is, then, a prayer of pure love; and Fr. Rahner shows us why and how we should see it as such.

Yet with all this, *Happiness through Prayer* does not make for easy reading. Fr. Rahner is fond of metaphysical speculation, his style is often involved, his prose (at least in translation) turgid. Added to this, the typographical presentation of his book is most unattractive.

The Lord's Prayer is yet another series of sermons. The publishers style it "a necessary adjunct" to a previously published series, *Prayer in Practice*. It is not easy to see in what sense they employ the adjective *necessary*; though it is true that this book is strongly reminiscent of *Prayer in Practice*. We are frequently reminded that these elaborations of the seven petitions of the *Our Father* are sermons, by such phrases as "Our Meditations on the *Our Father* are drawing to a close": "we now turn to the second part of the Lord's Prayer." At the same time, the translator has succeeded in giving us a glimpse of his author's rhetorical power; and as always with Mgr. Guardini, the pages are redolent with the Pauline spirit and the Patristic homiletic tradition. Our Lord intended that the prayer He himself taught His disciples should be our daily bread. And Mgr. Guardini is preoccupied with encouraging us to "pray always." Occasionally we are irritatingly reminded that this is a translation—as in the elaborate statement on p. 49 that "Thy kingdom come" is not an exact translation of Our Lord's words: "actually it should be 'May Thy kingdom arrive' or 'May Thy kingdom come' "!

Pledge of Glory suggests itself as a book which could help us with our thanksgivings after Holy Communion. It purports to be a book of "Meditations based on the Prayer of Sister Elizabeth of the Trinity,"

the Carmelite contemplative of the last century. In point of fact, the words of Sister Elizabeth are merely a starting-point which enable the author to give us the benefit of his deep knowledge of the Eucharistic texts of Holy Scripture, of the Psalms, of St. John and St. Paul. The value of these Meditations is precisely here. Dom Eugene (or his translator) constantly addresses Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist as "Jesus Hostia"—hardly a term which suggests intimate personal relations. And in one place at least the language seems to create a theological problem: "He whom I adore here in my soul, *with Jesus Hostia*, is the Thought of the Father." (*Italics mine.*)

Conversation with Christ is frankly a disappointment. Fr. Rohrbach specifically sets out to clear up "muddled thinking about mental prayer"—to simplify our daily prayer. Much of what he has to say he summarises thus: "If we can talk to our acquaintances why can we not talk to Christ?" The answer which occurs to many people who find their daily meditation so often a trial and a burden, is "Because He never seems to say a word to me in reply." Fr. Rohrbach, in spite of his very wise and sensible words on distraction and aridity, never answers this very real difficulty in set terms. He never discusses the vital words in the definition of St. Teresa which he adopts as his own, "Mental prayer is nothing else than an intimate friendship, a frequent heart-to-heart conversation with Him *by whom we know ourselves to be loved.*" (*Italics mine.*) Unless we know, with that growing conviction and absolute surety, which is itself the fruit of perseverance in the life of prayer; unless we *know*, in the reality and truth of living faith, that "He loved me and delivered Himself for me," and loves me *now* with an infinite love, personal and intimate, such heart-to-heart conversation is impossible. To attain to this knowledge, which is itself an awareness of contact, of union with Our Lord, to live consciously our life with Him—this is at once the purpose of all our prayer and meditation, and the only adequate fulfilment of our basic needs. But in fairness to Fr. Rohrbach it must be added that his book will serve as a very adequate introduction to those who are afraid of the word meditation, or know nothing of its practice.

The question may legitimately be raised whether it is advisable to offer to the English public, in the field of spiritual writing as in any other, a book specifically designed—from the literary and idiomatic point of view—for a specifically American public. Phrases such as "we stand the risk of becoming victims of that vicious habit of sing-songing our prayers without actually contacting Christ," "meditative prayer lies beyond the range of audio-sensory perception," or "I am ready to inaugurate my conversation with Christ," or "aridity is a sometime thing," have not much appeal on this side of the Atlantic. We might go further and ask why, in spiritual writing, translations

so heavily outweigh native publications. It would be less puzzling if Catholic publishers were drawing on the Church's treasury, the writings of the Fathers and the saints of the Church. Instead, we are being deluged with works of an uncertain, and at best, an ephemeral value—a constant stream of "pot-boilers." A little more discrimination, a little more encouragement of "home industry" seems to be called for from Catholic publishers.

JAMES WALSH

AN AGREEABLE WRITER

England's on the Anvil, by John Raymond (Collins 18s).

MR. JOHN RAYMOND'S ESSAYS are, let it be said at the outset, eminently readable. It is perhaps as well to make this bald statement to begin with as so much, alas, cannot always be said of collections of book reviews. Mr. Raymond, however, knows exactly what he wants to say, and says it with a sort of effortless grace which might well serve as a model for all those who practise this form of writing. But the extent of knowledge upon which the whole is based is what is even more immediately impressive. We all of us like to think that we have read a lot; some of us may even pretend to have read rather more than we actually have; but few, when it came to the point, would be able to show such solid proofs of information upon so many and disparate subjects. "My idea of an agreeable person," as one of Dizzy's characters remarks, "is a person who agrees with me." Mr. Raymond, I find, is a highly agreeable writer. It was high time, for example, that somebody—somebody, that is, of Mr. Raymond's stature as a critic—spoke up about Belloc.

"A great man has been consistently denigrated and dishonoured because his faith and political opinions happened to be at variance with the ethos of Mr. Gollancz (not then an inter-denominational Zen Buddhist) and of the Left Book Club. A dozen bad and absurdly prejudiced historical works, written at reckless speed and in his sixties to earn money, gave a phalanx of dons . . . the opportunity for a smokescreen of sneers that has effectively hidden Belloc's genius from a generation of readers." That is forcibly and truly said. I sometimes wonder, however, whether Belloc's real decline in popular estimation as a writer did not date from his *Land and Water* articles in World War I. They were written in a tone of such magistral certainty by one who knew every inch of the ground over which the fighting was taking place, who knew from inside knowledge of the French army that it was invincible, that they were accepted, wholly and uncritically, by everyone, from the Higher Command to the man in the street, as

irrefutable. It was indeed true that Belloc did know the ground and the French army; unfortunately he knew very little about the German so that his calculations of a short war based on attrition of the enemy's strength were seen, long before the end was in sight, to have been mistaken so that the prophet came in for an amount of abuse all the greater in view of the adulation he had received before. I am inclined to wonder therefore whether the public, as their way is, ever really forgave him for leading them up that particular, and too hopeful, garden path. Anyway, thanks to Mr. Raymond and Mr. Robert Speaight, whose biography is given due commendation, it is pleasing to know that justice is now being done him. And not to him alone. John Buchan, that "pious fetichist—of the Baldwin age," who, because he offers too tempting a target, has seldom received his due, is here accorded a keen and withal kindly appraisal. As likewise is Sir Compton Mackenzie, with the percipient comment that, as a writer, "his roots are in the green room." But it required a good deal more than mere percipience to append the adjective "vulgar" to Bloomsbury, and to remark—this with particular reference to Lytton Strachey—that "great art and limited sympathies go ill together." There is no end, however, to the good things with which this collection abounds, ranging as it does from Flaubert's Letters to St. Ignatius, from Modern India to Ancient Rome. Mr. Raymond in fact finds an increasing resemblance between fourth-century Rome and the age in which we live. It is, let me say by way of reassurance, the only note of real pessimism that he sounds.

JOHN McEWEN

A NEW CRITIQUE OF REASON

Insight: A Study of Human Understanding, by Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S. J. (Longmans 63s).

FR. LONERGAN'S RECENT VOLUME challenges both the reader and the reviewer. It is a vast design, that has been carried through with great care for detail, and the design and detail make it no easy book to read. On the other hand, it approaches the whole problem of understanding and knowledge in a way which, if not exactly new, is very sound, coherent and illuminating. In a sense, it is a critique of both pure and practical reason that comes to happier conclusions than did those of Immanuel Kant.

Understanding is studied as *insight*, the act by which ultimately we grasp the meaning of a term or the reality of a situation. It is no mere process of reasoning; it is an operation of "nous" rather than "dianoia"; there is a click, a flash—and you now know. Fr. Lonergan speaks of it

as the act of organising intelligence. The best elements of modern systems are brought into his approach: there is the existentialist note in his insistence that he is dealing with a concrete thinker, not with abstract thought, and the phenomenalist in his analysis of experience. The book, he tells us, operates on three levels: it studies human understanding, unfolds the philosophical implications of that understanding, and tackles the problem of the flight from understanding. Its aim is to find a common ground on which men of intelligence may meet, sure of themselves and of their instruments for knowledge. But this common ground cannot be established until the insights of specialists and practical men have been examined. Accordingly, the first half of the work reflects on these more limited insights, in the realms, for instance, of the sciences and mathematics. No radical distinction is made between scientific thinking and common sense, for both are intellectual activities. Science is concerned with the universal, common sense with the concrete and particular. "Rational choice," the author declares, "is not between science and common sense; it is a choice of both, of science to master the universal, and of common sense to deal with the particular." Further, science seeks the relation of things to one another, common sense their relation to ourselves. Both the pure and the practical reason have their insights, which are formed into patterns of knowledge or of experience.

The method is therefore a study of the mind in its activity; this has to be differentiated from other human experience; it must be checked and counterchecked and followed through a maze of counter- and reverse-insights. The aim is clarity and also precision. Yet philosophy is concerned not just with insight but with a special kind of insight, which lies further back than the insights of the specialist and the practical man. Philosophy is an insight into insights—a sort of *meta-insight*, we might say, which establishes the validity of insights generally. In studying this philosophic insight, Fr. Lonergan points out that his aim is not the details of what is known but the structure of the knowing mind; he is interested, to begin with, not in knowledge of objects marked by a catalogue of abstract properties but in the gradual appropriation of a man's own intellectual and rational self-consciousness. It is a process, he insists, "that can begin in any sufficiently cultured consciousness, that expands in virtue of the dynamic tendencies of that consciousness itself, and that heads through an understanding of all understanding to a basic understanding of all that can be understood." He thus takes his stand very firmly on the terrain of solid and certain reason. Man has a mind, man can know, and it is one and the same instrument of knowledge. Elsewhere, he writes: "*Thoroughly understand what it is to understand*, and not only will you understand the broad lines of all there is to be understood but also you will possess a

fixed base, an invariant pattern, opening upon all further developments of understanding."

The second part of the book studies insight as knowledge. Knowledge, which has first to be examined as a process of mind, is rooted in the primacy of Being. To this *meta*-insight there corresponds *meta*-physics, the realm that transcends the insights of specialist and man of practical action. Being is the objective of our pure desire to know; it is an unrestricted notion, a spontaneous notion, an all-pervasive notion. Metaphysics underlies, penetrates, transforms and unifies all other departments of knowledge. Yet, here again, Fr. Lonergan is not dealing with Being in the abstract but in so far as it can become the object of or is proportionate to human knowing. Proportionate being, therefore, is what is or can be known by intelligent grasp and reasonable affirmation. The structure of proportionate being corresponds to the structure of the thinking mind. "There exists a necessary isomorphism between our knowing and its proportionate known. But that parallel is missed by Spinoza's deductivist *ordo idearum est ordo rerum*. The correct locus of the parallel is to be found in the dynamic structure of our knowing. . . . The contents of cognitional acts either refer to the known or are identical with the known, and so the dynamic structure of knowing is also the structure of proportionate being."

This is a massive work, the result of years of study and personal reflection. Fr. Lonergan says modestly that it is not "erudite." Possibly not, for he means that every man, in the last resort, is capable of some insight into insight. It is long and lucid and goes into great detail, though the detail is presented in the most orderly and schematic way. For the reader this schematism has certain disadvantages; while it clarifies the force of the argument, it can lessen its appeal. However, small points apart, Fr. Lonergan deserves the highest praise and congratulation for his work which will be of distinct value for the serious thinker.

JOHN MURRAY

MALORY REDIVIVUS

The Once and Future King, by T. H. White (Collins 25s).

MR. WHITE'S TETRALOGY, based on Malory's version of the Arthurian Legend, is now complete. It comprises four novels, *The Sword in the Stone*, *The Queen of Air and Darkness*, *The Ill-Made Knight*, and *The Candle in the Wind*, all in the rich energetic style, capable of high comedy and high tragedy and acute delineation, which the author almost unflinching commands.

For those who treasured *The Sword in the Stone* as a wonderful and essentially youthful book, the finished product, though still wonderful,

may be rather disturbing. It is decidedly not for children. It contains a good deal of amatory and political matter, and two most gruesome episodes (one involving a cat, the other a unicorn) which I am glad I did not read at the age of twelve. Moreover, the gravity of the later books has led Mr. White to revise the *Sword* itself to bring it more into harmony. As a result some of the best comic passages have gone, and the Wart's adventures among the animals include a grim visit to an ant's nest modelled on *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, even to a version of Newspeak. I don't altogether like this.

The magnificent Merlyn, with his knack of remembering the future and forgetting the past, is still here discoursing amiably of Mafeking and top-hats. His multiple time-scale has now become thematic. The Arthurian experiment is made to occur in a Platonic realm where the whole expanse of the Middle Ages is simultaneously present. History in the normal sense is thrown away: Arthur is no Celt, no "distressed Briton hopping about in a suit of woad in the fifth century"; he is a quintessential Plantagenet with Saxon serfs, and, by a very bold inversion, the Celts are turned into his chief enemies. In Arthur's kingdom the whole of medieval Europe is summed up, and historical monarchs such as Henry III and Louis XI are spoken of as fictitious, being mere shadows or feeble expressions of the Arthurian archetype.

This immense crystal sphere of imagination is finally shattered by a message which comes with one of the memorable shocks of literature.

"Mordred is using guns."

Rochester asked in bewilderment: "Guns?"

"He is using the cannon."

It was too much for the old priest's intellects.

"It is incredible!" he said. "To say we are dead, and to marry the queen! And then to use cannon . . ."

"Now that the guns have come," said Arthur, "the Table is over. We must hurry home."

"To use cannons against men!"

Although it is the vision of chivalry that dies here, Mr. White makes the vision itself serve unexpected ends. The evolution of the Round Table is interwoven with ideas about international peace and the rule of law, which sometimes strike a "progressive" cosmopolitan note a little out of keeping with the heraldic and hierarchical atmosphere.

But complaint is ungracious when a writer has given us so much. Malory's characters, legitimately developed, all live afresh, and from beginning to end there are the superb touches which the first page of the *Sword* would lead us to expect—the babu English of the Saracen knight Palomides; the eventual and ironical triumph of the public-

school Quixote King Pellinore; the everlasting *de trop* ineptitude of Elaine; and much else. Here is one of my favourite bits of dialogue:

"You could never sit a hundred and fifty knights at a round table. Let me see . . ."

Merlyn, who hardly ever interfered in the arguments now, but sat with his hands folded on his stomach and beamed, helped Kay out of the difficulty.

"It would need to be about fifty yards across," he said. "You do it by 2πr."

How delightful it is, at long last, to find somebody facing this issue.

I closed Mr. White's book fully persuaded of the truth of his implication that the myth of Arthur's return does still mean something for England—even though it might be hard to say what.

GEOFFREY ASHE

Jerusalem, by Michel Join-Lambert; translated by Charlotte Haldane (Elek Books 30s).

THIS BOOK traces the history of the Holy City from times that are in fact pre-historic. This means extreme compression; there is no room for the presentation of the characters of the men who were, one after another, responsible for the transformations of the ancient site. But M. Join-Lambert keeps close to his subject, which is indeed the material history of this mysterious city which has been a magnet to Israel, Islam and Christianity. But from the victory of Saladin in 1187 to the arrival of Lord Allenby in 1917, history is compressed into but a page and a half; and (wisely, we think) no suggestion is made about the future of the City, or the abnormal conditions in which the three Faiths must at present co-exist there. But the photographs are magnificent and very numerous; and there are maps or charts old and new. On p. 162, Our Lady, asserting her virginity, says (in the Koran): "No mortal has touched me and I am not a woman." Can the French original of this have been *femme*, and mean *wife*? Highly as the Koran exalts Our Lady, it certainly does not lift her above humanity.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor, THE MONTH.

8 September 1958

DEAR SIR,

A recent review in THE MONTH has just been brought to our attention. The book reviewed is our recent title *A History of the Catholic Church*, by Ludwig Hertling, S.J. Your reviewer maintains

that the letter "s" throughout the book in the chapter headings is upside down. I am afraid this is completely incorrect, since the type-face used is called "Libra" and the "s" in this face might seem to look upside down, but it is quite correct. We could verify this by sending actual fount specimens from the printer, if your reviewer would like to see them.

Very sincerely yours,

THE NEWMAN PRESS
JOHN J. McHALE

BELMONT ABBEY, HEREFORD
4 October 1958

The Editor, THE MONTH.

DEAR SIR,

In connection with the forthcoming centenary of Belmont Abbey next year a history of the house has now been written, and the Community, feeling that many of your readers would be glad to hear about this, would greatly appreciate the hospitality of your columns that attention may be drawn to it.

Belmont has a somewhat unusual history in that for some sixty years it was the Common Noviciate and the House of Studies for the whole of the English Benedictine Congregation, while at the same time its church was the Pro-Cathedral for the Diocese of Newport and Menevia (later Newport alone), the senior monks being the Canons of the Diocese, which in this connection ceased, and at the same time the house became an independent monastery, being elevated to the rank of an Abbey in 1920.

The volume that has now been written tells for the first time the inner story of these and other changes, and is based on original documents now in the Abbey archives, together with many hitherto unpublished passages from the correspondence of prominent personages of the time. It also gives a vivid picture of the life and work of the monks, and of the various personalities who played a prominent part in the hundred years of the monastery's existence.

But the book can be published only if sufficient advance orders for it are received by the publishers, and we feel sure that many of your readers would like to secure a copy. The approximate price of the volume, which will run to about 300 pages and will be illustrated, will be 25s., and any who have not already ordered a copy, and would like to have one, are asked to write to me, or direct to the Bloomsbury Publishing Company, 34 Bloomsbury Street, London, W.C.1.

Yours faithfully,

D. M. MARTIN, O.S.B.
Abbot.



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STARTING in January 1959 a series of articles will be published in each issue on the principal mystical and ascetical writers in the Church. The series when completed in two or three years will form an unusual and fascinating history of mysticism, for the teaching of each of the great figures will be set in an individual and personal framework. Apart from many well-known English writers, a number of French authors of distinction have agreed to contribute. A list of some of the articles and their authors is here given:

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Fr Jean Daniélou, S.J.

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The Editor, THE MONTH,
114 Mount Street, London, W.1.



MADAME has ordained that she will visit dear Cousin Emily in Budleigh Salterton (up all those devilish Devon Hills!)

MADAME does not lightly tolerate impediments on her journeys, therefore everything has got to go perfectly – including the car!

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